Daily Report

East Europe

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CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.
An Ω indicates a Foreign Media Note.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Boban: Progress in Talks Depends on Muslims *[AFP]* 1
Delegations Agree on Cease-Fire Until 3 Jan *[Sarajevo Radio]* 1
Tudjman Letter Criticizes Attack on Convoy *[Zagreb Radio]* 1
Owen Appeals For Bosnia War To 'Formally End' *[AFP]* 2
Bosnia Talks To Be Continued 15 Jan *[TANJUG]* 3
Karadzic Condemns EU Reaction to Concessions *[TANJUG]* 4

ALBANIA

Berisha Hails 'Positive Changes' *[ATA]* 5
Justice Ministry Reiterates Law on Parties *[ATA]* 5
Article Condemns 'Sanctions-Busting' Activities *[KOHE JONE 23 Dec]* 5
Ambassadorial Level Relations With Macedonia *[ATA]* 6

BULGARIA

Zhirinovskiy Pays Bulgaria Private Visit *[BTA]* 7
Wants Adviser To Be President *[BTA]* 7
Discusses Russian Borders *[BTA]* 7
Zhelev Denounces Zhirinovskiy *[Sofia Radio]* 8
Foreign Ministry 'Surprised' *[BTA]* 8
Zhelev Foreign Policy Remarks in Radio Interview *[BTA]* 8
Privatization Agency Submits Annual Report *[BTA]* 9
Berov Gives Christmas Address to Nation *[BTA]* 9

CZECH REPUBLIC

Rabin: Nuclear Supplies to Iran 'Dangerous' *[CTK]* 10
Commentary on Russian Elections, Joining NATO *[CESKY DENIK 18 Dec]* 10
Deputy Foreign Minister Meets NATO Diplomats *[CTK]* 11
Territorial Administration Principles Adopted *[CTK]* 11
Klaus on Territorial Divisions, Slovak Relations *[Prague Radio]* 11
Klaus Describes Czechs as 'Optimistic' *[CTK]* 12

SLOVAKIA

Meciar Says 1994 State Budget Realistic *[CTK]* 13
SNS Leader Abstains From Budget Vote *[CTK]* 13
Cernak Discusses Coalition Problems *[Bratislava TV]* 13
SNS Condemns 'Stupid Loyalty' to Meciar *[CTK]* 13
MKDH Not To Cancel 8 Jan Hungarian Rally *[CTK]* 14
Deputies Fear 'Bloodshed' *[REPUBLIKA 21 Dec]* 14
KDH Against Hungarian Appeal *[CTK]* 14
Hungarian Party Rejects Appeal *[CTK]* 15
Import Surcharge To Be Introduced 'Very Soon' *[CTK]* 15
Ministry Abolishes Fees for Permits for Czechs *[CTK]* 15
Official Concedes Radio Under 'Political Pressure' *[SME 22 Dec]* 15
Political Motives Suspected in Firms' Changes *[SLOVENSKY DENNIK 22 Dec]* 16
Meciar: Slovaks Top Czechs in Some Indicators *[CTK]* 17

HUNGARY

Interview With Prime Minister Boross *[Budapest Radio]* 18
National Bank Publishes Data on Foreign Debt *[MAGYAR HIRLAP 21 Dec]* 19
New Interior Minister on Tasks, Party Position *[MAGYAR HIRLAP 22 Dec]* 19
Ethnic Germans 'Shocked' By Electoral Law *[MTI]* 20
Goncz Signs New Defense Law *[MTI]* 20
Hungary May Get Russian Anti-Aircraft Systems *[MTI]* 20
Goncz Interviewed on 'State of Mind' of Country *[MTI]* 20

POLAND

1994 Budget Bill Adopted After Debate *[PAP]* 22
NATO Head on Pact, Russia, Polish Membership *[Warsaw TV]* 22
Oil Transit Agreement with Germany *[PAP]* 23
Talasiewicz on Border Cooperation with Germany *[GLOS SZCZECINSKI 16 Dec]* 24

ROMANIA

PUNR's Salagean Favors Vacaroiu's Resignation *[ADEVARUL 21 Dec]* 25
PUNR Presents 'Crisis Program' *[ROMPRES]* 26
Nastase Believes Government Reshuffle Necessary *[ROMPRES]* 26
Iliescu Begins Inter-Party Talks With PDAR's Surdu *[Bucharest Radio]* 26
National Bank Outlines New Monetary Policies *[ROMPRES]* 27
Daily Warns Against Underestimating Zhirinovskiy *[ROMANIA LIBERA 21 Dec]* 27
Melescanu on Ties With United States, Russia *[ROMPRES]* 28
Additional Trade Protocol With EC Signed *[ROMPRES]* 28

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Izetbegovic: No Reason for Optimism at Talks *[Sarajevo Radio]* 29
Karadzic, Krajisnik on Muslim Position at Talks *[TANJUG]* 30
Krajisnik: Milosevic Role in Talks 'Very Positive' *[Belgrade TV]* 31
Mladic Reportedly Wounded While Inspecting Troops *[TANJUG]* 32
Serbs Deny Wounding *[TANJUG]* 32
Serbs in Sarajevo Repel 'Powerful' Muslim Attack *[TANJUG]* 32
Serbian Offensive Reported *[Sarajevo Radio]* 32
Sarajevo Remains Without Electricity *[Sarajevo Radio]* 33
Humanitarian Aid Convoy Arrives in Sarajevo *[AFP]* 33
Sarajevo Radio Reports Widespread Fighting 33
Muslim Attacks on Croatian Enclaves Reported *[Zagreb Radio]* 34
Over 30 Croats Killed *[Zagreb Radio]* 34
Mostar Reported Under Heavy Artillery Attack *[Sarajevo Radio]* 34
Muslims Appeal to Izetbegovic to Stop Bloodshed *[TANJUG]* 35
Muslims Capture British APC, Release Soldiers *[London PRESS ASSOCIATION]* 35
Bosnian Croats Protest Over UN Troops' 'Behavior' *[Zagreb Radio]* 35
Bosnian Croats Announce General Mobilization *[TANJUG]* 36
Ganic Denies Involvement With Algerian Massacre *[Sarajevo Radio]* 36

CROATIA

Granic Comments on Cease-Fire, Territory *[Zagreb TV]* 37
Tudjman Position in Latest Talks Viewed *[SLOBODNA DALMACIJA 20 Dec]* 38
Tudjman Demands Cease-Fire, Hints At Reprisals *[AFP]* 39
Babic Expected To Win Krajina Elections *[BORBA 23 Dec]* 40
UK's Hogg Meets With Tudjman, Susak in Zagreb *[Zagreb Radio]* 41

YUGOSLAVIA

Federal

Jovanovic: New Bosnian Accord To Be Drawn Up *[TANJUG]* 42
Dinar To Be Revalued After New Year *[TANJUG]* 42
Tax on Citizens Leaving Country Introduced *[Belgrade Radio]* 42
Kontic, Djukanovic Discuss Economic Policy *[TANJUG]* 42
Milosevic, Bulatovic Attend Defense Council Meeting *[TANJUG]* 43
Government Appeals to UN To Lift Sports Sanctions *[TANJUG]* 43
Government Statement on Combatting Inflation *[TANJUG]* 43

Serbia

Simic Considered Candidate for Future Premier *[POLITIKA 23 Dec]* 43
Democratic Party Protests 'Rigged' Votes *[TANJUG]* 44
Voting To Be Repeated at 45 Polling Stations *[TANJUG]* 44

Macedonia

Parliament Decides To Apply for NATO Membership *[MIC 24 Dec]* 44
Albania To Establish Diplomatic Relations *[TANJUG]* 44

Boban: Progress in Talks Depends on Muslims

AU2312144193 Paris AFP in English 1319 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Brussels, Nov 23 (AFP)—Progress in peace talks for Bosnia-Hercegovina is only possible if Bosnian Moslems end their current military offensive there, the leader of Bosnia's Croat community, Mate Boban, said here Thursday.

He was speaking after nearly four hours of negotiations with Alija Izetbegovic, president of the Moslem-dominated Bosnian government.

Boban confirmed that a ceasefire agreed here Wednesday by the warring factions was supposed to take effect Thursday, to last until January 15.

But he told journalists: "Progress is possible only if the (Moslem) offensive ceases. We have information that there was a large-scale Moslem offensive over the last two days that killed 40 people."

The Croat leader said he had proposed that United Nations observers be stationed at the military headquarters of Croats, Serbs and Moslems ""so that everyone will know who is breaking the ceasefire and it will be said publicly."

He also announced that international mediators, would be meeting soon with Croats and Moslems to define the areas of Mostar, in south-west Bosnia, which are supposed to be placed under European Community administration.

A Croat-Moslem agreement to allow EC administration of a multi-ethnic Mostar was one of the main achievements of two days of talks here. But Boban indicated that the Croats would not agree to allow the fishing village of Neum to be developed into a port which would give the Moslems access to the sea. The village was an ecologically-protected zone, he said. Bosnia's Moslems have been pressing for joint Croat-Moslem administration of Croat-controlled Neum.

Boban praised the European Community's efforts to keep the negotiations going and "keep up the pressure" on the warring parties. He said that the talks between Moslems, Serbs and Croats might resume here next week.

The co-chairmen of the Bosnia peace talks, EC envoy and David Owen, were chairing separate talks here Thursday—first between the Bosnian Croats and Moslems, then between the Bosnian Serbs and the Moslems. This followed Wednesday's meetings between EC foreign ministers, the leaders of Serbia and Croatia, and the Serb, Croat and Moslem communities in Bosnia.

Delegations Agree on Cease-Fire Until 3 Jan

AU2312160793 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Report by Mufid Memija from Brussels]

[Text] It is shortly before 1300 now. The three-hour bilateral talks with the representatives of Croatia, whose negotiators were [Croatian Prime Minister] Hrvoje Sarinic, [Deputy Prime Minister] Mate Granic, [Herzeg-Bosna President] Boban, and [Croatian candidate for Bosnian prime minister] Akmadzic, have ended. The topics discussed were Neum, Mostar, a cease-fire, and the situation in central Bosnia. The other side has received the explanation of our idea suggesting a condominium, that is to say, joint sovereignty of the Bosnian and the Croatian republics over Neum, (?in writing). While this will be analyzed in the Croatian diplomatic infrastructure in the next few days, the official answer to this proposal can be expected immediately at the beginning of the New Year.

Although they firmly resisted this yesterday, the Croats today bowed to the possibility of the European Union organizing and implementing (?the administration) in Mostar (?during of first two years) [words indistinct].

A cease-fire in all points of contacts of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army and the Croatian Defense Council has been mutually agreed as of tomorrow until 3 January 1994. Regarding the situation in central Bosnia, the Croatian sources speak of the alleged offensive of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, which our delegation could not confirm. However, our side has again expressed its unconditional readiness to [words indistinct] the end hostilities. (?The implementation of) [words indistinct] bilateral agreements about peaceful resolution of the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict.

Immediately after the departure of the Croats, the Serbian negotiators entered the hall. For the time being there is no information as to what is being discussed. However, according to [word indistinct] outlined by [republic of Srpska president] Karadzic and [republic of Srpska assembly chairman] Krajisnik, one can expect their flexible attitude toward our justified territorial demands.

As we have learned from the administration of the European Union in Brussels, our delegation consisting of President Izetbegovic, Prime Minister Silajdzic, and [words indistinct] Foreign Minister Ljubijankic, the chief of our mission to the UN and Izetbegovic will have a separate meting with cochairmen Vance and Owen today.

Tudjman Letter Criticizes Attack on Convoy

LD2312181393 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] We have just received a letter that Croatian President Franjo Tudjman today sent to Willy Claes,

chairman of the EU [European Union] Ministerial Council. We will broadcast the letter in its entirety:

As I informed you and the honorable EU ministers during our talks in Brussels, the unprecedented two-day suffering of the White Path humanitarian convoy for Nova Bila and central Bosnia, inflicted mainly by the extremists in the ranks of the Bosnian Muslim forces, is not only an immoral action, but it also presents a serious obstacle for the peace process and a threat to overall future relations between Croats and Muslims.

Upon my arrival in Zagreb, I received many very disturbing pieces of news—one of them being that a driver was killed and three other members of the convoy were wounded. In contravention of the agreement and the Muslim side's guarantees, part of the convoy was held in the area controlled by the Muslims until late night on Wednesday [22 December 1993]. It is claimed that about 30 trucks were stolen in order to be used as a shield in offensives against the Croat Defense Council [HVO]. Fire was opened on doctors, nurses, Franciscan priests and nuns, as well as on journalists who accompanied the convoy. An American journalist, Tuts Yamaouchi, working for an independent news agency, was wounded. A direct attack on the convoy was launched at 1430 in the vicinity of Dobrosin near Pavlovica.

I would like to remind your excellency that a few days ago in Geneva, the Muslim side signed an agreement on the complete freedom of passage for humanitarian convoys and gave guarantees for the free flow of aid for all who need it. Despite this, as the talks in Geneva and Brussels reached a focal point, the Muslim side obviously decided to undertake one of the fiercest offensives in central Bosnia, that is, an offensive against all remaining Croat enclaves.

Muslim forces controlled by Alija Izetbegovic's government on Wednesday [22 December] launched an attack on Zepce, the Lasva valley—mainly Vitez and Nova Bila—Novi Travnik, the Uskopje valley, Busovaca, Kiseljak, and Kresevo. More than 600 cannon and mortar shells hit Zepce alone. Many people, including innocent civilians and children were killed or wounded, some of them reportedly even massacred.

According to information currently available to me, on Wednesday alone 24 people were killed, including three children, and 47 were wounded, including seven children. The HVO have informed me that they had intercepted the following order issued by Dzemal Merdan, the deputy commander of the Third Corps of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army:

First, destroy all human force, including women, children, and the elderly, in the areas of Novi Travnik, Nova Bila, Vitez, and Busovaca, in order to link these areas with the Muslim enclave of Stari Vitez and Kruscica. Use all available means to achieve that—infantry, chemical agents, and all volunteers from Islamic countries in the glory of the Holy Allah. [end of Merdan's order]

All this leads me to believe that we are facing something resembling a resolute final offensive, which culminated only a few hours before the Christmas cease-fire was to come into effect. I believe that the offensive that is underway, as well as the consequences of the tragic suffering of the White Path convoy, could have a great impact on the peace talks in Brussels and on future Croat-Muslim cooperation.

Therefore, I am energetically addressing your excellency so that you will use your good reputation and influence to exert further pressure on the Muslim side to immediately halt all offensive actions and cease-fire in central Bosnia. Izetbegovic should be clearly told that this is the key precondition for the continuation of any significant talks, President Tudjman said on concluding his letter to Willy Claes.

Owen Appeals For Bosnia War To 'Formally End'

AU2312182293 Paris AFP in English 1805 GMT 23 Dec 93

[By Graham Brown]

[Text] Brussels, Dec 23 (AFP)—European Community negotiator David Owen appealed to the warring parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina here Thursday to end their two-year civil war formally on January 15.

After a three-day session of inconclusive peace talks, he called on Serbs, Croats and Moslems in Bosnia to respect a ceasefire from December 23 to January 15, and use the respite to break their negotiating deadlock.

But in Sarajevo, where the Christmas truce was supposed to have come into force Thursday morning, at least two people were killed and 39 wounded in sniper and shelling attacks.

Owen said the three sides had agreed to meet again in Geneva on January 15—the last day of the ceasefire.

"It is our profound hope that sufficient progress is made to get a settlement on the 15th. We have asked all sides to bring their final compromises (to that meeting)," he said.

But Owen made it clear that he was not over-optimistic of the result.

He said continuing fighting in Bosnia could turn the ceasefire into "just another joke."

The EC envoy added: "If the political will is missing, the parties will go away and fight through January, February and March, and there is nothing we can do about it."

Owen was speaking at a press conference after three days of negotiations—first in Geneva on Tuesday, then in the Belgian capital on Wednesday and Thursday.

The meeting, which involved at various times the European Community's foreign ministers and the leaders of

all the parties to the Bosnian conflict, made little concrete progress except to announce the ceasefire.

But Owen said the three sides had agreed to continue negotiations on a wide range of disputes.

He said the ceasefire had little chance of holding unless the warring sides believed that a final political settlement was in sight.

The negotiators could not settle a dispute over the three-way partition of Bosnia into Serb, Croat and Moslem republics.

The Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, refused to endorse proposals for the United Nations administration of Sarajevo to protect its status as a multi-ethnic city. He proposed dividing the Bosnian capital into Bosnian Moslem and Serb sections.

Karadzic also said the Serb community had made all the land concessions demanded of it by the European Community and was prepared to go no further.

Speaking to journalists, he threatened to withdraw the offer altogether if the Moslems did not accept it by January 15.

The Bosnian Croats, for their part, agreed grudgingly that the administration of the south-eastern Bosnian town of Mostar should be placed under EC administration to stop Croat-Moslem fighting there.

But Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban made it clear that tough negotiating lay ahead to define what part of the city should fall under the plan.

The Croats would not agree to proposals that the fishing village of Neum should be converted into a port under joint Croat-Moslem control to give the Bosnian Moslems access to the sea.

And the Serbs refused to allow the airport of Tuzla, in central Bosnia, to be reopened for use by UN aid missions.

The Serbs, Croats and Moslems had agreed in Geneva to increase the Moslem share of a three-way partition of Bosnia from 30 to 33.33 percent.

But when the negotiations moved to Brussels on Wednesday, the Moslems said the quality of the land offered was not good enough.

They demanded that land seized from them through "ethnic cleansing" campaigns in central Bosnia should be returned.

Bosnia Talks To Be Continued 15 Jan

LD2312230193 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2221 GMT 23 Dec 93

["Pool" item]

[Text] Brussels, December 23 (TANJUG)—Agreement on the peace plan for Bosnia-Herzegovina was not reached in Brussels Thursday so that the representatives of the warring sides will continue the talks in Geneva on January 15, said peace mediator David Owen Thursday.

The new Geneva meeting was planned to take place exactly on expiry of the Christmas ceasefire agreement, which comes into force on Thursday at midnight, and on which the three Bosnian sides—the Serbs, Muslims and Croats—reached accord Wednesday.

Owen told a press conference he hoped that it would be possible to reach agreement at that time.

He assessed that any postponement would threaten the peace efforts on the whole with serious risk of escalation of fighting in the spring.

He added that for this very reason all the talks' participants have been asked to come to Geneva with the mandates of their respective parliaments, so they could, in the event of the talks' favorable outcome, sign the peace agreement right away.

In return to Belgrade Wednesday night, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic said the Serbs tried to give such concessions as would satisfy all the vital interests of the Muslims.

Leader of the Bosnian Serbs Radovan Karadzic said Thursday that the Serb side has done nearly all the European Union has asked it to do, apart from reopening of the airport in Tuzla, a Muslim enclave in northeastern Bosnia.

If the European Union was really concerned about the humanitarian aid so much, he said, why then did it not seek opening of airports in other cities too. He gave as an example, the city of Banja Luka, which was held by Serbs.

Karadzic had doubts as regards the opening of the airport in Tuzla as he believes that instead of for humanitarian reasons it would be used for bringing in arms to the Muslim side.

He rejected complaints about the poor quality of the offered land, and said that on the contrary, the Muslim side got the territories with developed economic, energy and communications infrastructure.

The Bosnian Serb leader asked the Muslims to formulate their final demands and warned that if they did not do this by January 15 and did not accept the peace agreement as a whole, then the Serb side would be forced to withdraw all the previously given concessions.

Karadzic Condemns EU Reaction to Concessions

LD2412135093 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1106 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Geneva, 24 Dec (TANJUG)—The Muslim side is as far from a political solution for ex-Bosnia-Herzegovina as the Serb side is close to it, Radovan Karadzic, president of the Serb Republic told a TANJUG reporter shortly before his return from Geneva to Belgrade.

Unless the concessions made by the Serb side are accepted as a political solution they will be withdrawn, Radovan Karadzic cautions.

The Serb-Croat map was not accepted, he said summing up the results of the Geneva and Brussels talks. "Because we are giving more territory to the Muslims we are forced to cancel our agreement with the Croats regarding their 17.5 percent [of territory] which was earmarked for the Croatian community of Herzeg-Bosna," Karadzic added and said that the Serbian side's concessions were not taken seriously in Brussels.

These sacrifices have been underestimated so there is nothing else we can do but care about our own interests," he said. In this connection, he stressed that by rejecting the joint map the European Union [EU] in effect scrapped the entire Serbian-Croatian deal.

As regards Sarajevo, there is a variant whereby the Serbian would accept the UN's administration, the president of the Serb Republic made clear. As far as its division into two cities is concerned, Karadzic insisted on precision, explaining that this is not a matter of splitting it up into two cities but of setting up two cities which already exist in reality thanks primarily to the Serbs who have given the Muslims the largest part of the city center.

"The Serbs are forming another city, a second Sarajevo in the vicinity of the old one," Karadzic clarified adding that this is a way of satisfying Serb and Muslim interests although it is obvious that "the Serbs have once again sacrificed some of their interests."

The Serbs have given a strip of land around the enclaves in eastern Bosnia, rather than a corridor, which is more than sufficiently wide. As for Sarajevo's exit, if they want to the Muslim can exchange quality for quantity, Karadzic stressed.

"Supported by the international community, the Muslims, however, are demanding both quality and quantity for their territory, including even some specific settlements and points on the map. They are simply behaving as winners by setting their conditions."

There is no reason for us to argue with the Muslims over their access to the Sava as the Serb side has made concessions in this area too, Radovan Karadzic said. The Muslims will have a sovereign part of Brcko and a port. If they want a sovereign road—i.e. a flyover which must run over the territory of the Serb Republic—in Karadzic's view, some 10 kilometres of flyover means nothing if one wants to reach a final solution. "I believe that this can be achieved."

Karadzic categorically rejected any possibility that the Croat concessions to the Muslims, such as the concept of Mostar being governed by the EU, will change the circumstances and undermine the Serb negotiating position.

"We cannot care less about what the Muslims and Croats do. We rely solely on ourselves", Radovan Karadzic, president of the Serbian Republic, said in conclusion.

Berisha Hails 'Positive Changes'

AU2512180193 Tirana ATA in English 0916 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Tirana, December 25 (ATA)—"I wholeheartedly greet all Christian believers in Albania and wherever they are on occasion of Christmas", a message of President Berisha says.

This celebration was rejuvenated two years ago in Albania and the birth of the Christ is celebrated in Albania just like in all free civilized countries, the president says, pointing out that this brings peace and benevolence, courage and faith, love and tolerance.

The positive changes are clear on this second anniversary: this year Christmas is celebrated amidst an expansion and consolidation of the freedom of speech. The Albanian church, following the tradition of the great Albanian priests, has played and is playing its great spiritual role, thus contributing a lot to this real national renaissance of the Albanians, in healing the wounds caused by the Communist regime. As a martyrized church it is honoured throughout the world. Evidence of this fact are the high considerations by many personalities such as the speech of the holy father, John Paul the Second, when he visited the martyred Albanian land. His prayer will always serve as a point of reference in our daily work. "By marching towards democracy, we should never forget the bitter past," Mr. Berisha stresses, "and the sufferings of others in the world. Near our country [line of text omitted as received] bombs. We wish them and many others that this be the last year of sufferings for them. Faith in God is an inexhaustible source of strength for all of us. Nothing is won without work, sweat, confidence and hope. Let this hope be a message and guide in our road. We Albanians have manifested during all our life patience, bravery, wisdom and relighious tolerance, we have resisted and overcome very difficult situations. We are sure that more beautiful Christmas celebrations will come in a more advanced and prosperous Albania," Mr. Berisha said in conclusion.

Justice Ministry Reiterates Law on Parties

AU2412114593 Tirana ATA in English 0914 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Tirana, December 24 (ATA)—Proceeding from reports of several political parties in mass media regarding their activity abroad as well as from the interest shown by several citizens at the Ministry of Justice, the spokesman of the ministry announced on the Albanian Television:

"Based on Article 6 of the Law on Political Parties, no political party created outside the territory of the Republic of Albania is recognized. Based on Article 14 of the same law, foreign citizens who have no permanent residence to the Republic of Albania can neither take part in forming a party nor be its members."

Article Condemns 'Sanctions-Busting' Activities

AU2412205093 Lezhe KOHA JONE in Albanian 23 Dec 93 p 3

[Editorial: "The European Embargo Against Serbia Openly Flouted in Lake Shkoder"]

[Text] A long time ago, KOHA JONE and some other newspapers such as GAZETA SHQIPTARE reported very alarming activities being conducted on Lake Shkoder. Goods are daily being transported from Albania to Montenegro. This traffic involves a multiple danger. First of all, goods that are scarce on the Albanian market or that can only be found at prices that are very high for our workers' wages, are being taken out of the country. Nevertheless, the Albanian people are deprived of these goods, and they pass to another state such as Montenegro or Serbia. One must ask what the government is doing, faced with this shocking fact. Is it this government's purpose to help its own people or the opposite? Why is such trade allowed?

Second, this trade is alarming because, as the whole world knows, the European Union has imposed an embargo against Serbia with strict sanctions even for neighboring countries. However, while on the one hand the Albanian Government squeals and swears by support for Europe and European principles, Albania is at the same time a sanctions-busting country. Even if the smuggling in Shkoder is not organized by the state, responsibility nevertheless falls on the Albanian Government. At a time when the Albanian Government is proclaiming "enemies" and "pro-Serbs" among the ranks of Albanian intellectuals, it is simultaneously, in flagrant contravention of Europe's decision, allowing the delivery of goods to the same Serbia that kindled the war in Bosnia and is threatening Kosova too with the danger of war.

The Albanian newspapers, and KOHA JONE among the first, long ago exposed the fact that it is none other than we Albanians who are violating the embargo. However, the government seems to take a dim view of newspapers, apart from RILINDJA DEMOKRATIKE, and will not listen to what they say. However, very great damage has been done.

This problem has recently greatly concerned the foreign press and the European institutions themselves. Yesterday morning, the BBC exposed this very alarming fact, with proof drawn from evidence gathered in Montenegro. The newspaper BALKAN NEWS also devotes considerable attention to this matter in its most recent issue. The newspaper writes that the smugglers carry by boat oil, cigarettes, cows, calves, beer, and other alcoholic drinks. BALKAN NEWS also refers to the CSCE's Sanctions Assistance Mission (SAM), which has used the following words: "The phenomenon is alarming." According to this newspaper, the SAM's inspectors state that these activities are conducted in close cooperation with the Montenegrin police, customs, and Army.

According to the data given by this foreign newspaper, no less than 100 contraband shipments are carried across Lake Shkoder every day. Again according to the foreign press, this phenomenon could not and cannot escape the notice of the Albanian Government. Even Abdyl Xhaja himself, the minister of energy and oil, has stated in connection with these activities that there are anomalies in the country's gasoline supply, because "it regrettably vanishes toward an unknown destination."

So, once again: The Albanian state and Government are faced with another large-scale scandal that extends even beyond Albania's borders. What will it do, faced with this scandal? What will we all do, faced with scandals?

Ambassadorial Level Relations With Macedonia

AU2512180093 Tirana ATA in English 0902 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Report by Lindita Karadaku]

[Text] Tirana, December 25 (ATA)—On December 24, the Republic of Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia established diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level, the albanian ministry of foreign affairs reported. According to this ministry, this act was taken proceeding from the desire of the two countries to further consolidate and develop their friendly relations and cooperation.

Asked to comment on this new development of relations between the two neighbouring countries, the spokesman of the foreign ministry told the ATA reporter, Lindita Karadaku, that "a stable and independent Macedonia is a factor for peace and stability in the Balkans."

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was recognized by the Republic of Albania at the beginning of this year. So far, there has been an Albanian diplomatic representation in Skopje headed by Mr. Shaban Sinani [name as received]. There is no report on the names of the ambassadors of the two countries in Tirana and Skopje.

About 20 percent of the population of Macedonia is made up of ethnic Albanians, according to Macedonian census. They are concentrated mainly in the western part of the country. According to Albanians, their number in Macedonia is twice as many as that officially declared by Macedonian authorities. A new census is expected in Macedonia and it will be observed by international organizations.

The ethnic Albanians of Macedonia are politically organized, they have their parties, among which the biggest is the Party of Democratic Prosperity. They also have their representatives in the Macedonian Parliament and Government.

The Albanians of Macedonia have demanded the observation of all their rights, including here the right to be considered a state- forming element. These rights have been strongly supported by the Albanian government and state.

Albania has reacted towards the policy followed by Macedonian authorities regarding the observation of the rights of the Albanians there and it has put its veto for Macedonia not to be accepted in the CSCE, pointing out the non-observation of these rights recognized by all international conventions.

Zhirinovskiy Pays Bulgaria Private Visit

AU2612155793 Sofia BTA in English 2203 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Sofia, December 25 (BTA)—Vladimir Zhirinovskiy arrived at the Sofia airport this evening after a visit to Austria.

The leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) asked the BTA reporter to give his best Christmas wishes to the Bulgarian nation.

It is a private "flying visit" and does not follow invitation of any of the political parties in Bulgaria, Mr. Zhirinovskiy said. He also said he intends to pay similar visits to all East European countries.

The Russian guest will stay in Sandanski (southwestern Bulgaria). On December 28 he is expected to lay a wreath to the monument to the Liberator King in Sofia and give a news conference. The LDP leader is accompanied by Svetoslav Stoilov, Bulgarian living in Vienna.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy visited this country in late July, 1993, at the invitation of the Bulgarian extra-parliamentary Liberal Democratic Party.

Wants Adviser To Be President

AU2612211693 Sofia BTA in English 1949 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Sandanski, December 26 (BTA)—Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who arrived on a visit to Bulgaria last night, is now staying in Sandanski (southwestern Bulgaria). "Bulgaria and Russia are closely linked," the Russian guest told journalists at an off-the-cuff news conference. "Now the situation here is calm and stable and Bulgaria and Russia together can help settle the crisis in the Balkans," Mr. Zhirinovskiy said. He reiterated his desire to see a person like his economic advisor Svetoslav Stoilov become president of Bulgaria.

Mr Stoilov was born in Sandanski and now lives in Vienna, BTA learned from its correspondent.

"This visit will be a short one, I can meet representatives of Bulgarian business circles," Mr. Zhirinovskiy told journalists. He is planning to lay flowers at the monument to the Russian King Alexander II in Sofia on Tuesday [28 December] and is ready to meet Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev at any time, journalists learned at the news conference.

Dwelling on the situation in the Balkans, the LDP leader said he is in favour of demilitarization of the region.

"We should restore what used to help us, both in economy and in culture. But nobody has the right to tell Bulgarian people how to live, who to govern them, what parties to have. Bulgarians alone can decide their fate," Mr. Zhirinovskiy concluded. In an interview on the national TV, the LDP leader said he is the only nominee for future presidential elections.

Discusses Russian Borders

AU2612191893 Sofia BTA in English 1757 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Sofia, December 26 (BTA)—The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has nothing to do with fascism or communism, it is a centrist, moderate conservative party with a liberal-democratic programme, LDP leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy told a BTA interviewer upon his arrival on a private visit to Bulgaria. "Nationalism is the major ideologic weapon in the former Soviet Union and Soviet republics, in some regions anti-Russian attitudes are getting more outspoken" Mr. Zhirinovskiy said. He stressed his view that nations should not confront each other but went on to say "they are trying to brand us supporters of Russian nationalism." "We believe that Russia is the homeland for everybody and do not accept the idea of restoring the former USSR and CIS. We stand in favour of a Russian state, a great Russia, which will be the homeland for all people living on its territory. And see what they make of this: They try to persuade people that we are Russian nationalists, that we want a pure Russian state. There is nothing of the kind and since they lack the arguments to fight us, they resorted to lies. They made lies their political weapon," the Russian guest said.

Asked his opinion on the Kurile Islands problem and Poland and Finland's concerns stirred up after his electoral victory, the interviewee said all the allegations that his political programme threatens these countries' sovereignty were fabrications. "People used to say that the rule of the Communist Party was criminal and had to be done away with. I, in my capacity as a jurist, have always said that I was born under this rule and do not consider myself a criminal. It was an absolutely normal country, but some mistakes were made in its government, though. I was telling them that if the West thought the government in Russia was criminal and should be done away with, then the borders set by this criminal regime should also be done away with and have them the way they were before the October Revolution," Zhirinovskiy told the interviewer. "For me, Finland's sovereignty is not a questionable issue," he also said. "It was them who raised the question. They got scared. We never spoke of getting Finland back. We do not need it. Finland should remain the way it is now. The same holds true for Poland," the LDP leader said. The USSR, however, is a different story, according to him. "We believe that the future borders of Russia might be what used to be once the Soviet Union but it may happen only if these former USSR territories, which have proclaimed themselves sovereign, want it. If they do, they may approach Russia's new political leadership to get incorporated into Russia's borders. It won't happen unless they want it," Mr. Zhirinovskiy said.

"We are enemies," the interviewee said answering a question on the military blocs. "After the Warsaw Pact

was disbanded, it would be perfect for us to have NATO, as a military alliance, disbanded too. However, East European nations and Russia are quite likely to form an economic and cultural union with no military clauses whatsoever, similar to the western European Union," Mr. Zhirinovskiy went on to say.

The interviewee accused Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev as the main culprit for the bad things that have happened in Russia and Eastern Europe since April 1985. According to Mr. Zhirinovskiy, in December 1991 Gorbachev understood he had gone the wrong way and this made him resign. "But I think that the period of transition in Russia and all East European countries has come to an end and these countries will soon see new political leaders come to power. Conditions will soon be ripe for sustainable peace and democracy for everybody, not for a single nation or group of individuals only. Man will be of paramount importance, he will be even more important than the state," Vladimir Zhirinovskiy said.

Zhelev Denounces Zhirinovskiy

AU2612162993 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1600 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Bulgaria is an independent state that can resolve its problems alone, President Zhelev said today, answering questions Khorizont Radio listeners' questions on our foreign policy.

President Zhelev describes the interview with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who arrived in Bulgaria on a private visit, as the idle chatter of a frivolous politician who is trying to interfere in Bulgaria's internal affairs.

Foreign Ministry 'Surprised'

AU2712120093 Sofia BTA in English 1149 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Sofia, December 27 (BTA)—The Bulgarian Foreign Ministry is surprised at the statement and evaluations made by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of Russia's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), who is on a private visit to Bulgaria, the Foreign Ministry's Press Office said today. Such statements about the policy and political system of the Republic of Bulgaria are impermissible from the point of view of international law and hark back to practices of the past. They do not further the idea of the Bulgarian public that irreversible democratic changes are taking place in the foreign policy orientation of leading political forces in Russia. Such statements could hardly be said to further the stabilization of the complicated situation in the Balkans, the Foreign Ministry also said.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy yesterday called for a change in Bulgaria's political leadership and for the replacement of President Zhelyu Zhelev in particular. For his part, Dr Zhelev described his statements as a misunderstanding.

"The Bulgarian Foreign Ministry accepts the statement of the Russian Embassy in Sofia that the deputy of the state Duma and leader of Russia's Liberal Democratic Party were made in a private capacity. Bulgaria's sovereign policy, including equality in Bulgarian-Russian relation, is based solely on Bulgaria's national interests and the international law principles," the Foreign Ministry said.

Yesterday the Russian Embassy distanced itself from the LDP leader's words, stressing they were private in nature. "They have nothing to do with Russia's policy based on noninterference in the internal affairs of other countries," the Russian Embassy said, emphasizing the friendly character of relations between Russia and Bulgaria.

Zhelev Foreign Policy Remarks in Radio Interview

AU2612202693 Sofia BTA in English 1912 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Sofia, December 26 (BTA)—International politics entered a unique stage of its development, Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev said in a nearly one-hour interview on the national radio. The arising of intercontinental structures into which the new democracies get integrated made possible for the first time small and medium-size countries to seek guarantees for their national security, economic development and presence in this world, according to President Zhelev. "Due to the European structures we are together with Germany, Russia, Britain, France and the U.S. at one and the same time," Dr. Zhelev said.

Asked whether he accepts the European Union formulation "former Republic of Macedonia," the interviewee answered in the negative. "We do not accept this name because Bulgaria, which was the first to recognize the sovereignty of the four former Yugoslav republics, recognized Macedonia under the name Republic of Macedonia." "I do not see why we should change our stand only because a certain international organization makes a compromise when tackling this question. And we believe that each country and nation is free to decide on the name of is own state," Dr. Zhelev said.

According to the interviewee, the accusations of inactive foreign politics against Bulgaria are groundless. "Bulgaria was the first to formulate the principles of its foreign policy in the Balkans: no interference in the Yugo-conflict and taking no advantage of the difficulties that the disintegrating Yugoslav federation is facing, Dr. Zhelev reminded.

"Russia is a many-faceted issue now that it is passing through a period of transition under conditions which are far more complex and difficult than those in Bulgaria," the Bulgarian president said answering another question. According to him, Yeltsin and the Russian democrats are those who implement the reforms, assuming grave risks and a lot of scorn. "In this line of reasoning, I distinguish between tha Russia of Yeltsin, of the reformers and democrats, from the Russia of the revenge-seekers and restorers like Zhirinovskiy," Dr.

Zhelev said. He said he supports Yeltsin and will continue to do so as long as he, Yeltsin, is the figure symbolizing the reforms and aspiration to democracy in Russia. "And we would never back those of his opponents who seek to restore the tzarist Russian Empire in an unpardonable way," the Bulgarian president went on to say.

Dr. Zhelev firmly opposed the idea of confronting NATO and Russia, as well as the speculations that a future entry of Bulgaria to NATO will trigger antagonism with Russia. "I cannot imagine a future collective security based on the present NATO structures without Russia," President Zhelev told the interviewer. He also said that fear from Russia is not among the motives for Bulgaria's desire to enter NATO.

Privatization Agency Submits Annual Report

AU2312195793 Sofia BTA in English 1825 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Sofia, December 23 (BTA)—The Privatization Agency's proceeds from transactions will reach 451.3 million leva by the end of this year, 153.5 million have already been received, the agency says in its annual report received at BTA. The Privatization Agency was set up with the Council of Ministers in May 1992 to manage the denationalization of big state-owned companies.

The agency concluded several transactions this year and there is only one that fell through - the sale of Magnitni Glavi Co. The Agency made a profit on the sales, besides, the new owners of privatized enterprises took over outstanding debts to the amount of 893 million leva. Agreed investments included, a total of 2,800 million leva went to the state, the annual report of the Privatization Agency says.

2,257 Natural and juristic persons were licensed as appraisers for the purposes of privatization. This is far more than this country's need, Mrs. Reneta Indzhova, executive director of the Privatization Agency, told reporters recently. The Agency studied 416 enterprises.

The Agency's privatization programme for next year was returned by the government for reconsideration. The cabinet decided that the proceeds of 6,500 million leva projected for 1994 were not sufficient. In Mrs. Indzhova's view, if the prices of enterprises offered for privatization are increased, they will become unsalable.

The difficulties in privatization stem from the legal framework which should be changed, the annual report says. According to Mrs. Indzhova however, the Privatization Act is applicable, it is more difficult to overcome the difficulties arising from public consciousness and the clash between certain group and economic interests.

Berov Gives Christmas Address to Nation

AU2412204893 Sofia BTA in English 1858 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Sofia, December 24 (BTA)—"A hard, but not futile, year is coming to an end. We lived through a lot of hardships," said Premier Lyuben berov in a Christmas address to the nation. "We lived through doubts and mistrust. I'd like to assure you that the Bulgarian Government and other state institutions did their best to press on with the process of political and economic changes which should restore Bulgaria's dignity as a peaceful, hard-working and respected European nation."

"I am sure Bulgaria made progress in the past 365 days. It made steps toward a better, a more secure future which we Bulgarians deserve. In our 1,300-year-long history, we've seen days of fame, yoke, plundering and destruction. Yet Bulgaria survived, overcoming the hardships of its historical fate," said Mr. Berov.

"That is why Bulgaria exists today. It will overcome the present difficulties. It will prosper tomorrow. That is why I would like all of us this evening to wish ourselves more wisdom, more work, more belief and more hope. If we help ourselves, God will help us, too."

Rabin: Nuclear Supplies to Iran 'Dangerous'

AU2312164693 Prague CTK in English 2029 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Prague, Dec 22 (CTK)—Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin "emphatically, requested Foreign Minister Josef Zieleniec during his visit to Israel last week that the Czech Republic not supply any nuclear power components to Iran, not even components considered useful exclusively for peaceful purposes, Israeli Ambassador to Czech Republic Moshe Yegar told CTK today.

He added that any deliveries to Iran having to do with nuclear energy are extraordinarily dangerous.

While in Israel, Zieleniec denied that any Czech exports to Iran could be used for non-peaceful purposes.

The Israeli Government's request to the Czech Republic is justified by the "terrorist" nature of the contemporary regime in Iran, the ambassador explained. He said Iran wants to obtain nuclear weapons "at any cost," and references to allegedly peaceful uses of nuclear power are only excuses to attain that goal.

Nuclear potential in Iran would be "an extraordinary and alarming danger" for the entire near east, Yegar warned.

The Czech company Skoda Plzen, which has experience in building nuclear power plants, admitted last week that its director had visited Teheran in November allegedly to discuss "supplies of parts for a nuclear power plant."

The American daily THE NEW YORK TIMES reported that according to American intelligence services, Iran has engaged in a secret program for the production of nuclear weapons. The paper said that Americans fear that Czech civil supplies could help Iran to obtain nuclear waste, which it could then transform into plutonium, the main component in nuclear explosives.

Commentary on Russian Elections, Joining NATO

AU2212190093 Prague CESKY DENIK in Czech 18 Dec 93 p 3

[Josef Mlejnek commentary: "Russian Elections and Us"]

[Text] The preliminary results of the Russian elections were a great shock to all who had expected a relatively easy victory of democracy (albeit "specifically Russian"). [Russian Liberal Democratic Party leader] Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's victory is now being belittled and people are pointing to the majority system used for the election of the second half of the Russian Duma. Here, instead of the "liberals," the so-called independent candidates scored a relative success, however they do not differ very much in their opinions from the communists. It is a mystery, then, why someone can be happy about this "success." The unfavorable results are also being belittled by saying that the newly adopted Constitution gives Yeltsin extensive powers, so that he almost does not have to take parliament's composition into account. At the same time, at least two things are being ignored. First, Zhirinovskiy has overwhelming support within the army and the Russian president must take parliament's composition into account, no matter whether he wants to or not. Second, the opinions of the Kremlin leader about international politics (see his notorious letter to Western politicians) are not favorable to us, and constitute "good enough a reason" to make us worry.

This is why it is a strange thing that Daniel Kroupa, deputy chairman of the Civic Democratic Alliance, did not know, until Zhirinovskiy had scored a success, that "in Russia there are imperialist forces that are interested in ruling over Central and Eastern Europe once again." "This should be a strong argument for the Czech Republic to push for the quick integration of Central Europe into NATO structures," Kroupa also said. Foreign Minister Zieleniec spoke in the same spirit in a television cast. Unfortunately, the West—which will support Yeltsin even more after the elections—will now have even more arguments "against" [admitting East European countries into NATO].

Shortly before the elections, Yevegeniy Primakov, chief of Russia intelligence (SUPR), aroused the interest of journalists when he familiarized them with the principal ideas of a report compiled by his office, which is interested in the problem of NATO's expansion by countries of Central and Eastern Europe. One part of this document, called "Russian Interests," was published by CESKY DENIK on Saturday, 11 December. Let us put aside speculations about why the intelligence chief spoke publicly about this document, what did he have in mind, etc. The text of "Russian Interests" is a logical and expertly drafted analysis to which every Russian, be it Yeltsin, Zhirinovskiy, [Russian First Deputy Prime Minister] Gaydar, or [Russian Communist Party leader] Zyuganov, must pay attention.

Russia has been, is, and will be a power. Any power follows certain patterns of behavior that a small country may not understand (our joining NATO cannot endanger Russia at all, we can often hear at news conferences given by our politicians), but this behavior is needed to preserve its status of a power. In their foreign policy, powers always deal with world's interests and situations, and their strategists always look at the entire globe when making their plans. The document drafted by Russian intelligence says: "The fact that the largest military alliance—having a colossal striking power at its own disposal—is coming closer to Russian borders, requires (a list of military measures follows....). These measures are logical from the military viewpoint and have to be implemented irrespective of the fact that Russia is no longer considered to be an enemy in the NATO political plans. The other side would take similar steps in a similar situation. "NATO's expansion would force Russia to implement a fundamental transformation of the army and redeploy it, which would lead,

among other things, to restrictions on military technological programs because of financial reasons. The need to rework the Treaty on Conventional Weapons in Europe (according to which the NATO and Warsaw Pact weapons have been reduced) would cause yet another problem."

Russians have always perceived themselves as a power, and NATO's expansion by Central Europen countries would change the perception of their country as a world power in the eyes of the others. The negative impact on the public opinion is not negligible, either. Moreover, if NATO is saying that it wants to cooperate with Russia (the West is certainly not at all interested in continuing the confrontation), then it would be illogical to expand the Alliance eastward. "The pact should transform itself from a military and political alliance, oriented at fending off an external threat, into a tool for securing peace and stability," the Russian intelligence report says. However, experts have expressed worries that new members could be admitted before NATO's metamorphosis is completed.

The Czech politicians still perceive NATO as "the old good NATO" of the Cold War times. However, the times have changed. If we ever join NATO, it will have the same name but a totally new structure. It will be built on absolutely different principles and have absolutely different tasks. To try to find security guaranties in Brussels is therefore somewhat naive.

Deputy Foreign Minister Meets NATO Diplomats

AU2312180293 Prague CTK in English 1217 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Prague, Dec 23 (CTK)—Deputy Foreign Minister Alexandr Vondra appreciated the importance of NATO for European security and stability during his meeting with heads of diplomatic missions of NATO states, Lucie Pilipova, a spokeswoman for the Foreign Ministry, told CTK today.

Vondra also pointed out the imperial and nationalist tendencies in Europe, she reported.

She said that Vondra had clarified the Czech Republic's attitude to the approaching NATO summit in Brussels which would be an important event also for the European non-NATO states.

The Czech Republic shares the view that success of the NATO summit also depends on whether it will confirm its openness towards countries which will be ready to enter it, Pilipova quoted Vondra as having said.

Vondra confirmed that the Czech Republic was preparing itself for its participation in the Partnership for Peace project which would create a more solid framework for the relations between non-NATO states and the alliance, and which was expected to be approved by the January NATO summit.

Territorial Administration Principles Adopted

AU2312160993 Prague CTK in English 1534 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Prague, Dec 22 (CTK)—The government today adopted in an 18:1 vote a statement of principles on the territorial administration of the Czech Republic, Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus announced today.

The statement was drafted yesterday by the chairmen of the four government coalition parties.

Klaus emphasized that the government had now "passed the halfway point" with regard to the territorial administration question, since even though it had adopted a statement of principles, it has still not agreed on any kind of timetable.

Klaus said that under the principles, a land or an area made up of one or several regions could be recognized as a higher self- governing unit. He said this left considerable flexibility regarding the size of such units. Defining the territories of individual regions will be done after the constitutional law on higher self-administrative units takes effect, Klaus said. He said according to the principles adopted today the law is to take effect six months after it is passed by parliament.

Klaus said the change of borders of lands and regions in future will be implemented through a standard law and not a constitutional one. The name and administrative center of self-governing units will be decided by local authorities at their first meeting after elections.

"Some higher administrative units will be called lands and some regions. It will be up to local authorities to decide," Klaus said.

He said local administrations will start exercising their powers after a constitutional law on the powers of higher self- administrative units is passed.

Klaus on Territorial Divisions, Slovak Relations

LD2312232793 Prague Radiozurnal Radio Network in Czech 1700 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Regular interview with Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus by editors Katerina Kasparova and Vaclav Musilek; place, date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted]

[Kasparova] You refused to describe the Czech Government approval of the Law on Higher Territorial and Administrative Units as a Christmas present or a gain of one political party over other political parties. But the compromise must have come about somehow. Could it have been perhaps a time factor—or in other words, the end of the year deadline set for the government by the parliament—that had to a certain extent contributed to this compromise?

[Klaus] I resolutely reject the idea that one political party has done something exceptional and that the others had just joined in. We were very hesitant as to our ability to draw up the principles of this law in the short period outlined by the parliament. I do not wish to sound critical, but the principles are too general and lack definition. But to a certain extent I agree with them. But I think that it was not possible to do more. After all, we should not ask for the impossible. The government was able to set up the highest common denominator for our views, and it is precisely the adopted principles of this law that form the highest common denominator. At that moment, the government does not harbor any aspirations to draw the boundaries dividing individual regions or lands [kraje a zeme]. The overwhelming majority of the government was able to understand that the core issue is not the boundaries of regions and lands, but the powers, or in other words, what these territorial should units do. [indistinct passage omitted]

The government approached the issue in a responsible manner. I think and I hope that the parliament will understand it in this way, too.

[Musilek] After several months, you met the Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar in Budapest. Was it more or less a normal meeting between two prime ministers of neighboring countries, or did the case of this recently divided common state still dominate?

[Klaus] It was not a normal meeting. I spoke with the prime minister or chancellor of another neighboring country, Austria. And in this sense I must say that the meeting with the Slovak prime minister has not been a normal one yet. It has been marked by our 74 years-long common past. I do not feel any shame about this, but I think that it is good that this is how it really is. This meeting was interesting for me because I learnt more about the depth of the present Slovak political crisis, and I realized that it was an open-ended game [hra sotevrenym koncem]. I would like to add only one thing, that I wish Slovakia to find political stability . I wish it not only to Slovakia itself, but to all of us around Slovakia, because it is really in our most vital interest that Slovakia should be a normal, functional prosperous country. And I hope that Slovak politicians will be well aware of all of this. [passage omitted: question to Klaus by the Kasparova on Klaus' prognosis for 1994, on how global unemployment might affect the Czech position, Klaus' general remarks on world economy trends and his Christmas wishes to the nation]

Klaus Describes Czechs as 'Optimistic'

AU2312212993 Prague CTK in English 2100 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Prague, Dec 23 (CTK)—In spite of expected rises in housing rents, electricity prices, and unemployment, "from a historical point of view" next year will be less eventful than this year and there is no need to fear any "turn for the worse," Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus told Czech Television today.

He said he had always been optimistic in this respect and believed that "Czech citizens are even more optimistic."

Klaus stressed that the path the Czech Republic has followed seems to be correct and feasible because the majority of the population approves of it. He said he personally saw no specific noticeable failure, "which could be solved in one concrete step by a government."

According to a public opinion poll conducted by the Institute for Public Opinion Research, 70 percent of Czech citizens are not satisfied with their living standard. Klaus said a person should feel discontent. Dissatisfaction is a fact of human life, of human behavior, which pushes humanity forward. People's dissatisfaction with themselves leads them to seek to improve their situation. That is why the question in the survey should have been put more precisely, Klaus said.

"We have many other concrete statistics," Klaus said, giving as an example the results of a poll testifying to public support for the government and for persons who represent the government. "That is why I would not draw far reaching conclusions," he added.

Meciar Says 1994 State Budget Realistic

AU2312162693 Prague CTK in English 1622 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Bratislava, Dec 22 (CTK)—Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar believes that the 1994 state budget approved by the Slovak parliament today can be fulfilled. "If we have peace for our work the budget will not only be fulfilled with a minimum deficit but be balanced," Meciar told journalists after the vote. He said the parliamentary vote on the budget was a Christmas gift to citizens to enable them to celebrate holiday in peace.

Meciar said he firmly believed that the results of economic development next year would be successful unless political struggle erupted. He said he meant not only "instability in the Slovak National Party (SNS) but the rivalry on the Slovak political scene in general which has been going on since 1992," adding that all political entities are responsible for it. Meciar said he did not consider the vote in favor of the budget on the part of the chairman of the opposition Democratic Left Party (SDL), Peter Weiss, deliberate but rather "accidental or erroneous."

Weiss confirmed it was by mistake that he voted for the approval of the budget bill and not against it as he had intended.

SNS Leader Abstains From Budget Vote

AU2312173893 Prague CTK in English 2058 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Bratislava, Dec 22 (CTK)—The budget will be responsible for the ruling coalition's defeat in local elections, Slovak National Party Chairman Ludovit Cernak told CTK today. Cernak abstained from today's budget vote. The coalition is binding but mechanisms exist for its disbandment, Cernak said when asked whether it still functions after the budget vote and split of the SNS group of deputies.

"The fact that some of us did not support the budget cannot be at all seen as an attack on the coalition, rather the opposite. The budget means that local elections will be a clear defeat since it contains severe cuts in local budgets," Cernak said. The budget vote had been "needlessly politicized" and a "budget approved in such a way is likely to cause us greater difficulties," Cernak added.

Cernak Discusses Coalition Problems

LD2412024493 Bratislava STV 1 Television Network in Slovak 1830 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] At a Slovak National Party [SNP] news conference today, party Chairman Ludovit Cernak said that his party was dissociating itself from the manner in which managing directors of joint stock companies—in which the Fund of National Property has a share—are being replaced. He devoted the most attention, however, to problems concerning the functioning of the coalition. According to the SNP chairman, one of the reason why the coalition has ceased to function is because Vladimir Meciar has made a personnel change in the post of the Prosecutor General a condition for the further fulfilment of agreements between our two parties.

[Begin Cernak recording] In addition, we had and still have reservations about the policy style, which is confrontational. Confrontation has prevailed over reason on the Slovak political scene. According to the Constitution, a deputy should be guided by his conscience when casting a vote. It is essential to ensure that deputies' clubs are positively motivated and that a deputy has a sufficient amount of information and facts to enable him to make a decision by himself so that there would be no reason for lobbying and cajoling deputies, for giving them promises and offering them posts in state administration and do everything possible to ensure that their votes are secured in this way. In the course of the debate on the budget, Prime Minister Meciar talked specifically with each deputy to secure their votes.

I had a lengthy conversation with Mr. Meciar yesterday, following the establishment of the rival club of SNP deputies. Our conversation was mostly of a rather private character during which we exchanged information. He parted with me by telling me what his course of action will be in the future, that he will label me as a destroyer, that I first destroyed the coalition, then the club of our deputies, and that now I am destroying the party, and his parting words were that since he has not come to an agreement with me, he shall come to an agreement with Mr. Weiss [chairman of the Party of the Democratic Left].

I shall continue to observe in principle the resolutions of our party's political organs also with regard to the course I have taken lately. As the chairman, I follow unequivocally the line that was set by the party's central council in Martin. The council at its meeting in Martin laid down that we should promote the principle of a partnership coalition. I and my colleague who are in favor of a partnership coalition have taken the course we have taken. I am firmly convinced that by observing the decision taken by the central council, the council will accept the course my colleagues and I have taken. [end recording]

SNS Condemns 'Stupid Loyalty' to Meciar

AU2312190793 Prague CTK in English 1619 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Bratislava, Dec 23 (CTK)—Slovak National Party (SNS) Chairman Ludovit Cernak said today those SNS deputies who "blindly identified themselves with the program and the methods of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), should go join the governing movement." A statement given to CTK today says that the SNS "wants to remain clean, and a party only for those voters and deputies who feel that its election promises should be fulfilled." The statement is signed by

SNS deputies Milan Janicina, Anton Hrnko, Stefan Kvietik, Gabriela Kaliska, and Vladimir Miskovsky.

"A deliberate policy of escalating tension and stupid loyalty toward Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar made cooperation within the SNS deputies' group impossible," the statement says. The authors say they want to distance themselves from the "chaos" in the party, to abide by the constitution and other laws and actively participate in their preparation.

MKDH Not To Cancel 8 Jan Hungarian Rally

AU2312130493 Prague CTK in English 0920 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Bratislava, Dec 21 (CTK)— [passage omitted] The Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement (MKDH) does not intend to cancel the planned meeting of the Council of the Association of Towns and Villages of Zitny Ostrov (SMOZO) on January 8 in Komarno, south Slovakia, Pal Csaky, a deputy for the MKDH, says in today's issue of the opposition daily SME. The same view is expressed by Arpad Duka-Zolyomi, deputy chairman of Egyutteles. Both of them see no reason to dissociate themselves from the meeting, or not to attend it, they tell the paper.

Csaky argues with President Michal Kovac's statement on the alleged unpreparedness of MKDH and Egyutteles representatives for their joint meeting on Sunday [19 December]. Csaky welcomes Kovac's initiative to resolve the ethnic minorities' problems, but says that it must be based on a "serious basis." According to Csaky, it is possible to expect that Slovak authorities "will take measures directed against the realization of the event."

"A politically thoughtless and unwise step" is the SMOZO appeal, Eva Mitrova, ambassador of the Slovak Standing Mission to the Council of Europe (CE), says in an interview with the daily SMENA, close to the HZDS [Movement for a Democratic Slovakia].

Mitrova reports that immediately on receiving the appeal, she handed it over to the Political Committee of the CE, as she deems it important to acquaint it with this sort of matters in time and correctly. She believes that CE representatives would welcome if the consideration of a solution to the ethnic issue waited until the January session of the CE Parliamentary Assembly. Slovakia is to present to it a report on the fulfillment of its obligations towards ethnic minorities, as they were formulated by the CE Council when Slovakia was admitted to the CE (in June).

Now the Hungarian parties represented in the Slovak Parliament seem "to be striving for something else" than for the defense of the minorities' rights, Mitrova states. Thus, they will have a difficult position in defending their point of view in the CE. But this can result in no adverse effects for Slovakia, Mitrova says. [passage omitted]

Deputies Fear 'Bloodshed'

AU2312144493 Bratislava REPUBLIKA in Slovak 21 Dec 93 p 3

[Unattributed report]

[Text] Bratislava—The National Council of the Slovak Republic Committee for State Administration, Territorial Self-Administration, and Ethnic Minorities held a meeting yesterday, which was attended by representatives of the Association of Zitny Ostrov [Rye Island, Hungarian-inhabited area along the Danube in southern Slovakia] Towns and Villages [ZMOZO] Council. Deputies asked that representatives of the ZMOZO Council respond to questions concerning specific formulations contained in the ZMOZO Appeal [calling for a meeting in Komarno on 8 January to establish self-rule in southern Slovakia and elect a 100-member assembly]. They wanted to know who actually signed that appeal and what its initiators intend to undertake in the event of its non-implementation. Several deputies voiced the fear that the whole action could lead to bloodshed in southern Slovakia.

KDH Against Hungarian Appeal

AU2312180593 Prague CTK in English 1317 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Bratislava, Dec 23 (CTK)—The appeal by the Association of Towns and Villages of Zitny Ostrov (SMOZO), asking the creation of a region with special legal status in south Slovakia, is unacceptable for Slovak political parties, Jan Carnogursky, chairman of the opposition Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) told journalists today.

The signatories of the appeal, which hurts more ethnic Hungarians than Slovaks, will not be able to create the region, Carnogursky said.

The KDH leadership assesses the mistake made by its deputy Ladislav Pittner, who voted for instead of against the draft 1994 budget yesterday, as his personal mistake.

Having taken into account his attitudes before and after November 1989 (overthrow of the communist regime) as well as the fact that it was already the 80th voting of the day, the KDH leadership expressed confidence in Pittner, Carnogursky reported.

In connection with the January NATO summit and Slovakia's prospects concerning its NATO membership, Carnogursky said that the worsened relations between Slovakia and Hungary reduced their hopes of getting security guarantees from NATO.

According to him, Hungary had strained relations with all its neighbors, except Austria, so that NATO's unwillingness to accept it will hit it more than Slovakia.

Hungarian Party Rejects Appeal

AU2312190693 Prague CTK in English 1632 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Bratislava, Dec 23 (CTK)—The Hungarian Civic Party (MOS) cannot agree with the appeal by the Association of Towns and Villages of Zitny Island (SMOZO) because it considers SMOZO's assessment of Slovakia's ethnic minority policies to be one-sided and "rather confrontational," MOS Chairman Laszlo Nagy told Slovak Radio today.

Although the MOS, a non-parliamentary Hungarian party in Slovakia, assesses national minority policies in Slovakia critically, it considers unfortunate the statement that all the steps undertaken by the current Slovak politicians in this sphere have led to escalating tension, Nagy said.

He said the only institute which had proved to be functional in solving national minority problems was a "round-table" discussion organized by Slovak President Michal Kovac with representatives of ethnic minorities.

The SMOZO convened a meeting of deputies and mayors of southern Slovakia on January 8 in Komarno, west Slovakia, aimed at creating a "region with special legal status" in southern Slovakia, populated mostly by Hungarians. Irrespective of the requests raised by the president, government and parliament, the organizers of the Komarno meeting did not agree either to postpone or to cancel it.

Import Surcharge To Be Introduced 'Very Soon'

AU2312162493 Prague CTK in English 1625 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Bratislava, Dec 22 (CTK)—The Slovak Finance Ministry approved a ten percent import surcharge on certain goods, ministry representatives said today. The main reason for the introduction of the surcharge was requests from Slovak farmers and grocers, whose products are not yet capable of competing with foreign products, including those imported from the Czech Republic. In accordance with international regulations, Slovakia must halve the surcharge within six months of the day it is introduced, which should be very soon.

Director of the Ministry's Economic and Finance Section Jozef Magula said that another important reason for the introduction of the surcharge was the protection of foreign currency reserves, which are being spent on imports of products that are often produced in Slovakia as well. Magula considers it important for Slovak entrepreneurs to make use of the period in which the surcharge is in effect to make their products competitive with foreign ones.

Ministry Abolishes Fees for Permits for Czechs

AU2312180493 Prague CTK in English 1208 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Bratislava, Dec 23 (CTK)—Administrative fees for residence permits granted to Czech citizens in Slovakia will be abolished as of January 1, Slovak Interior Ministry spokesman Peter Kuchar confirmed to CTK today.

The measure concerns only Czech citizens, not other foreigners, he stressed.

Under the Slovak law, the Czech citizens living in Slovakia, who were not simultaneously Slovak citizens on January 1, 1993 (when the Czechoslovak federation split), can opt for Slovak citizenship by December 31, 1993. If they do so, Czech authorities can consider them ex post to be persons who thus lost Czech citizenship under the Czech law on gaining and losing Czech state citizenship.

The Czechs who did not opt for Slovak citizenship have been required to pay a fee of 2,000-5,000 korunas ($60-150) for a five-year residence permit, which also applies to other foreigners. Some of the Czechs involved told CTK that the amount of the required fee had affected their decision to opt for Slovak citizenship.

A similar administrative fee paid by Slovak citizens in the Czech republic was 200 korunas (almost $7) only. The problem had been discussed by the two countries' presidents. On Wednesday [22 December], the Czech Republic proposed to immediately abolish all administrative fees for registration as residents in either country.

"It is a reciprocal measure. We want to make the situation of pensioners and other people easier and simpler, just as when the two sides tried to divide the state (federal Czechoslovakia) in a way not harming the citizens," Kuchar stated.

Asked why Slovakia decided to abolish the fees only a week before the deadline set for Czechs to chose their citizenship, Kuchar answered that "it is not decisive when the measure was adopted but that it has been adopted at all."

Official Concedes Radio Under 'Political Pressure'

AU2312214693 Bratislava SME in Slovak 22 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Interview with Ernest Weidler, first deputy director of Slovak Radio, by Boris Koren, place and date not given: "One Day, Radio's Independence Might Prove Beneficial Even for the Present Government"]

[Excerpts] [Koren] According to Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar, in the last few years the radio management has not implemented any cost-cutting measures that would make radio "more efficient" and for which the government is still waiting. You have mentioned the

reduction of stations operated by Slovak Radio [from three] to two. Is this the maximum the radio can do to reduce costs?

[Weidler] [passage omitted] If forced by the circumstances and "pressed to the wall," we could make still more concessions. It is possible to operate only one radio station, but the public would be strongly affected by this.

We do not know who is advising the prime minister in this matter and who is preparing background materials for him. For example, the staff of Slovak Radio used to include 150 orchestra members. We have already abolished the Big Band Radio Bratislava. If the cost-cutting affects also other orchestras, who will suffer? The impact on radio itself will not be all that tragic because we have enough music in our archives on records, tapes, and CDs. Rather, Slovak culture will suffer.

The number of radio employees will be cut by 200-220 by the end of the year, but I personally consider any further staff cuts scarcely effective and harmful.

[Koren] Mr. deputy director, how will you respond to the words uttered (or, if you want, supposedly uttered) by Vladimir Meciar at Zlata Idka that "the situation in radio and television is such that, on the 25th [of November] we expected the resignation of the Slovak Radio Council, including the director. Then they agreed not to resign yet."

[Weidler] I do not know from where the prime minister gets such information. I also cannot know whether the Slovak Radio Council and the Slovak Radio director had agreed on something. It seems to me absurd. At any rate, I think that it would be far more appropriate if high-level government officials did not directly interfere in the affairs of public corporations in this way. They themselves would, perhaps, benefit from it.

[Koren] In several interviews, the Slovak Radio director mentioned that political pressure was being brought to bear upon radio. Do you, too, concede that such pressure exists?

[Weidler] Of course, and I consider it extremely unfortunate on the part of some political officials who, having failed to comprehend the development thus far, do not realize that the independence of the mass media could, in the near future, prove very beneficial even for them. They themselves could profit if the medium manages to maintain its independence, objectivity, and access to it for all political subjects, to use a technical term. I consider this unfortunate and those who set too great a store by their personal and political influence will find it hard to assert themselves in a democratic society, if for no other reason than because the plurality of mass media actually exists, because there are private radio stations and newspapers. There is no way to stop the flow of diverse opinions.

Political Motives Suspected in Firms' Changes

AU2412094093

[Editorial Report] Slovak dailies on 21 and 22 December publish a number of reactions by Slovak politicians and company executives to the decision of the National Property Fund [FNM] Presidium (which is chaired by Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar, in his capacity as acting minister of privatization) to convene extraordinary general meetings of shareholders in 21 key Slovak enterprises within 30 days in order to carry out changes in their statutes and boards.

Bratislava SLOVENSKY DENNIK in Slovak on 22 December on page 2 carries a 600-word Peter Toth report entitled "Political Struggle for the Economy." Toth opens the report by saying: "Yesterday in Parliament, representatives of the Christian Democratic Movement [KDH], the Party of the Democratic Left [SDL], the Slovak National Party [SNS], and the Alliance of Democrats [AD] assumed a stand on the decision of the FNM Presidium of 9 December that places the boards of directors of 21 shareholding companies under obligation to call extraordinary general meetings of shareholders with the aim of bringing about personnel changes in the management of these companies."

"KDH Chairman Jan Carnogursky said that this is a politically-motivated effort to seize economic power. As he went on to say, this attempt at a sudden and inorganic replacement of the management bodies of these companies will have a negative impact on their management because the new executives will not know the operation of these companies as intimately as existing executives. This will, at the very least, jeopardize their operation for some time. According to Jan Carnogursky's words, this step could send a very negative signal abroad about the way the economy is run, since the government directly interferes, for political reasons, in the management of companies."

"SNS deputy Vladimir Miskovsky added that when, during yesterday's coalition talks, his party asked what all this is supposed to mean, it received a reply from the prime minister that he does not know anything about it. In this context deputy Miskovsky noted that there are minutes of the relevant FNM Presidium meeting, which include Prime Minister Meciar's signature."

In conclusion, Toth reports on the reaction of SDL deputy Plesnik, who is quoted as saying that "the decision was made without the knowledge of the Association of Investment Privatization Funds, the organization associating one of the decisive parts of shareholders. This course of action is a blow below the belt of the Slovak economy." In view of the latest developments, Plesnik also considers it necessary to adopt legislation under which "the minister of privatization and the minister of finance would not be members of the FNM Presidium."

Bratislava SMENA in Slovak on 22 December on page 1 carries a 500-word "am"-signed report entitled "The FNM Presidium Wants To Replace Directors of 21 Shareholding Companies With People From the Regions." The report quotes SDL deputy Plesnik as saying that "it is disquieting that the FNM Supervisory Board is initiating the replacement of managers even in shareholding companies that held extraordinary general meetings only three months ago, elected new management bodies, and are now slowly recovering." According to Plesnik, this affects Bucina Zvolen and TOS Trencin, for example. Plesnik wonders why the FNM is initiating meetings of shareholders even in companies, in which it owns only 12 percent of shares and in which, consequently, it cannot decisively influence the meetings' outcome. Commenting on the FNM Supervisory Board's recommendation that existing directors be replaced by "people from the region," Plesnik says that "this recommendation has an expressly political character."

Bratislava SME in Slovak on 22 December on pages 1 and 9 carries a 900-word report by reporters A. Strbava and J. Bogarova entitled "Ivan Carnogursky Compares the FNM's Decision to 1948 Nationalization." The report states: " 'When Mr. Meciar claims that he does not know about the list of companies in which extraordinary general meetings of shareholders are to be held, he is not telling the truth. Mr. Meciar had this list in his hands,' Peter Magvasi, member of the FNM Presidium and director of the National Insurance Company, said yesterday. He was reacting to the words of SNS Chairman Ludovit Cernak, who told SME that, during yesterday's coalition talks, Vladimir Meciar had informed him that he did not know anything about the list and that 'the FNM apparently made that decision in his absence'."

The SME reporters go on to quote from the minutes of the 9 December FNM Presidium meeting, which reportedly show that the list had been submitted by Finance Minister Julius Toth in his capacity as chairman of the FNM Supervisory Board.

Further on, the report quotes the opinions of the chief executives of three of the affected companies on the FNM Presidium's decision. They express "surprise" at the decision, demand an explanation of its purpose, and consider it "risky", as abrupt changes in management might jeopardize ongoing talks on the extension of credits. One of the executives, Ivan Carnogursky, director of Hydrostav Bratislava a.s., says: "The situation that has occurred after the order to simultaneously convene extraordinary general meetings in the 21 largest companies of Slovakia, which at present constitute the backbone of the Slovak economy, is equivalent to the shock created by the nationalization of 1948. The move casts doubt on all these companies and their management, and, at the very least, will naturally thwart the interest of foreign businessmen in them."

Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak on 21 December on page 3 carries a 600-word Zuzana Pemova report on a news conference given by Zoltan Berghauer, president of the East Slovak Iron Works [VSZ], the largest Slovak company, in Kosice on 20 December. Berghauer is quoted as having expressed his "shock" at the FNM Presidium's decision to convene an extraordinary general meeting of VSZ shareholders, "the agenda of which is to include change in statutes and election of Board of Directors and Supervisory Board members." Berghauer points out that the VSZ is one of the few steel companies in the world that is making profit, that it has achieved "historic results" in the export of rolled steel, and that it intends to pay its shareholders more than 180 million Slovak korunas in dividends. He stresses that "it is not customary to recall members of the Board and the Supervisory Board in companies that are functioning well."

Meciar: Slovaks Top Czechs in Some Indicators

AU2312173693 Prague CTK in English 2100 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Bratislava, Dec 22 (CTK)—Slovakia has surpassed the Czech Republic in some economic indicators, Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar said today.

"We are better off with a lesser debt per citizen, in production efficiency, in the increase of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per person and lately also inflation," Meciar told journalists. He added, however, that the Czech Republic had achieved better results in investments and some other indicators.

"In 1992, we were placed somewhere after Bulgaria among postcommunist countries. In the first half of 1993 we already ranked third as regards the speed of economic reform and social transformation and now, at the end of this year, in many economic indicators we share first place with the Czech Republic," Meciar said, assessing the results of this year's developments.

Interview With Prime Minister Boross

LD2612124393 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 0705 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Interview with Hungarian Prime Minister Peter Boross by correspondent Pal Lakatos; date and place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Announcer] The first manifestations of a new prime minister when he assumes office are valued as signals in any country and under any circumstances. They signal continuity and stress emphasis on the government of the country. It is these aspects with which I commend the interview of Prime Minister Peter Boross by Pal Lakatos, duty editor of the Sunday Newspaper program. [passage omitted]

[Lakatos] Antall said that he considered himself, in his soul, the prime minister of 15 million Hungarians. Not long ago you stated that, I quote: I am not against Jozsef Antall, on the contrary, I have always been behind him, unquote. Mr. Prime Minister, what do you think about the 15 million Hungarians?

[Boross] Well, it was this [Antall] statement, was it not, which the tendentious or ill will of a political nature has turned upside down by omitting to add the single word, soul. For, after all, a responsible Hungarian politician cannot forget about the fact that there are 15 million of us in the world. The 1,000 years that we have lived here in the Danube basin—struggling, often perishing—link us together. It is impossible to think Hungarian in any other way but in terms of the entirety of the Hungarian nation whose fate always obliges the Hungarian political leaders. It obliges them to care for all Hungarians, including those from whom the state borders separate us.

This is not a Hungarian phenomenon. It is perfectly natural for other healthy nations too, to want to integrate their brethren outside their borders into a special community. The opposite would be unnatural, indifference would be unforgivable. [passage omitted]

[Lakatos] A few days ago you said that the government would, come what may, submit the draft media law to parliament in January, but for this, discipline from public service employees was needed. [passage omitted]

[Boross] It is well-known that radio and television are a public service institution employing public employees. They are a special category of public employees and this, naturally, must be recognized. The status of public employee provides legal means for forming certain organizations—laws exist for this—and protests have appropriate frameworks and forms. Its other side, however, is a special kind of discipline. In other words, exercising rights also means—in my view—accepting obligations too: In behavior, manifestations, and in every other aspect.

If we want a media law there must be a calm atmosphere because it is well-known that emotional storms have surrounded and are surrounding it. This calm atmosphere must be created primarily by those who work in the media. [passage omitted]

[Lakatos] [passage omitted] You have said that several things have taken place in Hungary in the interests of the countryside, but all this has reached it only very slowly. In the 1994 budget, the countryside will receive its largest support ever, we are talking about 65 billion forints—of which 57.2 billion will be directed toward state subsidies for farming.

[Boross] [passage omitted] We must get these forms of support to the doors of the villages, in such a popular language that unambiguously says which office the farmer must go to, what he must take with him, when he can go. This is extraordinarily important because here we are talking about a historical legacy, a kind of distrust, this too must be understood. There, in the villages, simple and clear words have a significance and favorable reception. [passage omitted]

Indeed, the drought is now the largest problem. The last such drought was in 1952. [passage omitted] This changing agriculture, where landholdings are born anew, has survived a drought of this severity much better than in 1952 and for this reason too, I am an optimist. [passage omitted]

Well, the current land distribution procedure, which is taking place within a legal framework, is complex and sometimes difficult to understand, it sometimes makes the farmer swear as the only way to regain his equilibrium, well, all this is a burden, obviously. However, it must not be forgotten that in the past 3 and a half years this government has achieved, in a fistfight—I mean fistfight literally—that, at last, a natural state of affairs is created in the villages, i.e. that a man has property, for an unnatural state of affairs is when the villager has no property.

[Lakatos] We may be proud that for years now there has been order and calm. Can this order and calm be guarded under Peter Boross's premiership?

[Boross] The country should rest assured. [passage omitted] This is the order of freedom. Nobody can claim that the same degree of freedom, generally characteristic of bourgeois democracies, is not complete in Hungary. [passage omitted] What must be watched is that these freedoms should be asserted within the framework of the legal order. A country can prepare its future only if all of its citizens are clear that if they respect the legal order, they will come to no harm whatsoever. [passage omitted] This is a natural state of affairs and it is in this that public calm reigns. This government too will endeavor to maintain this state of affairs.

It represents enormous advantages for us—in the way that the big world outside judges the country—that this state of affairs here has been given adjective stability because it is really public calm, public order, which lies behind this adjective. [passage omitted]

National Bank Publishes Data on Foreign Debt

AU2112152493 Budapest MAGYAR HIRLAP in Hungarian 21 Dec 93 p 11

["A.L."-signed report: "Increasing Debt Stock—the Import of Machines Increased the Most"]

[Text] By the middle of August, the deficit of Hungary's current payment balance—mainly because of the negative balance of foreign trade—approached 2.22 billion forints, the Hungarian National Bank's [MNB] report states.

While in the first eight months of 1992, a surplus income of some $643 million was achieved, in the same period in 1993, the $7,115 million import expenditure was only offset by $5,090 million income from exports. The deterioration can largely be attributed to the decline of exports. The decrease of agricultural and food industry exports by 35.6 percent and consumer products by 32.8 percent are determining factors in the reduction of the value of exports. As for the target countries, the 28.8 percent decline of exports to the EC countries was particularly large. Tourism, which reached a $312- million surplus by the end of August, was barely able to alleviate the appalling statistics of foreign trade. Looking at the country's export and import activities, optimism can only be raised by one fact: While imports of energy sources decreased by 3 percent, the import of machines and equipment increased by most, by 15.1 percent.

The inflow of working capital that amounted to $776 million in the first eight months (which made the amount of foreign investments in Hungary close to $4.13 billion), which only offset 35 percent of the payment balance deficit; therefore, most of the deficit was covered by medium and long-term loans. During the first eight months, these loans amounted to $4.016 billion, while the country repaid $1.992 billion, which means that the net amount of new loans exceeded $2.024 billion.

On 31 August 1993, the country's net foreign debt was $23.838 billion. This is $2,400 million more than at the beginning of the year. However, the amount of foreign currency reserves increased by $880 million and reached $5.266 billion at the end of August. Therefore, the country's net stock of debts approached $15.33 billion, which is approximately $2.05 billion more than at the end of last year.

New Interior Minister on Tasks, Party Position

AU2312153493 Budapest MAGYAR HIRLAP in Hungarian 22 Dec 93 p 3

[Interview with Interior Minister Imre Konya by Janos Bercsi in Budapest on 21 December: "He Is Continuing Center Politics"]

[Excerpts] On 21 December, the parliamentary local government committee recommended Imre Konya's [chairman of the Hungarian Democratic Forum's, MDF, parliamentary group up until now] appointment as interior minister with 13 members voting for, five against, and two abstaining. At the committee meeting, Konya emphasized that radical personnel or structural changes must not be initiated in the next six months. Launching such steps would mean losing the sense of proportion. However, according to Konya, sweeping changes are not needed because his predecessors established a ministry that is able to function. The local governments' ability to function cannot be doubted, although mistakes are naturally made. For this reason, Konya considers it necessary to continue the efforts in the Interior Ministry to modernize the law on local governments. Konya said that he would only implement small changes in the police, and he intends to step up action against economic crimes. Responding to a question, Konya said that in the course of coordinating the draft police bills, he is ready to support all proposals that do not endanger the efficiency of police work.

After taking the oath, the new interior minister granted an interview to MAGYAR HIRLAP. [passage omitted]

[Bercsi] The size of the government coalition has recently decreased, and almost everyone has been calculating in the past days if the necessary number of votes will be cast in favor of the new prime minister. In this situation, what are your views on the MDF's position, and what do you expect from the future?

[Konya] Since the painful process of purification took place in the MDF, in which those people who wanted to divert the leading government party from the center left us, the setup and conditions in the party have certainly been cleared and settled by now, although this did not happen overnight. Although the MDF's parliamentary group has become smaller, its unity has noticeably strengthened. This is not only my subjective view; I believe that the voting on some rather important issues has proven this very well. [passage omitted]

[Bercsi] In your capacity as interior minister, you will keep your office of deputy chairman of the MDF; therefore, in addition to ministerial tasks, you will also have to participate in the election campaign. What are the chances of the MDF considering the current power structure and the situation of the country in the May elections?

[Konya] As an interior minister, I believe that the center policy also has to prevail in this area, because the values that Jozsef Antall asserted in his life also have to prevail in the Interior Ministry. We will obviously act in accordance with the rules of parliamentary democracy in the legislative process, but the ministry's political character will preserve the existing line. As for the campaign and preparations for the elections, I think that we, government politicians and ministers, cannot really spend all our time assessing the chances. We have to carry out our duties and solve everyday tasks, while we also have to take all steps and launch the processes we consider necessary in the interest of long- term goals and the

country. If we manage to consistently do all this up to the last moment, I am certain that the voters will also form a realistic view on our activities. If this is the case, then I am not very worried about the election results!

Ethnic Germans 'Shocked' By Electoral Law

AU2312180093 Budapest MTI in English 1733 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Budapest, December 23 (MTI)—Ethnic Germans in Hungary were shocked to learn that the electoral law amended by Parliament on Wednesday does not make it possible for minority ethnic groups in Hungary—including the Germans—to elect their own representatives to Parliament, according to a statement forwarded to MTI on Thursday by Geza Hambuch, chairman of the Federation of Germans in Hungary.

According to the statement, Parliament and the MPs who voted against the right of minorities to have their own lists have violated the Constitution and the minority law they enacted.

Hambuch said this sheds a poor light on Hungary's minority policy, and clearly harms Hungary's international prestige.

In conclusion, Hambuch said he would propose tc the presidium of the Federation that they turn to the Constitutional Court for legal remedy.

Goncz Signs New Defense Law

AU2312195093 Budapest MTI in English 1937 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Budapest, December 23 (MTI)—On Thursday, Hungarian President Arpad Goncz signed the new defence law, and the government approved the decree on its implementation, government spokeswoman Judit Juhasz said at her briefing on today's government session in Budapest.

Representatives of the Ministry of Defence who were present at the briefing noted that the promotion time of officers and deputy officers has been reduced with the new law.

One major change: Starting in February, young men called up for service will undergo a much more thorough, specialized medical and psychological examination.

The new law and the related constitutional amendment will continue to prescribe military service obligations, which can be fulfilled either through armed or civilian service. Under the terms of the new law, those studying in higher educational institutions will have the right to postpone their service.

The financial situation of the army was also discussed at the briefing. Colonel Gyorgy Paszto, leader of the Ministry of Defence's Defence Management Department, said the HUF 66.5 billion (approx. USD 665 million) available to the Ministry and the army only makes it possible maintain present deployment levels, no major developments will be possible.

Juhasz also announced that the government's Christmas children's ceremony will be held in the Budapest Opera House on December 25. More than 1,000 youngsters will participate, including 200 children from refugee camps throughout Hungary.

Hungary May Get Russian Anti-Aircraft Systems

AU2312123693 Budapest MTI in English 1036 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow/Budapest, 23 December (MTI)—Russia's government is not against the idea of repaying its debts to Hungary, over $800 million, in the form of one or more SZ-300 anti-aircraft systems, Mikhail Maley, a Russian National Security Council Committee chairman, told daily newspaper MAGYAR NEMZET on Thursday [23 December].

If Hungary stays interested in the deal, the SZ-300s, said to be better than the U.S. Patriots deployed in the Gulf war, may soon enter the arsenal of the Hungarian Army, said Maley, a security adviser to president Boris Yeltsin until September.

Maley denied that Russia would in any case like to get cash for the anti-aircraft system(s), for which a Hungarian delegation negotiating on the repayment of former Soviet debts indicated its interest. Maley supposes Russia's economic problems hinder the deal: The cabinet should first generate the ruble cover for the deal.

Russia wanted $520 million for one anti-aircraft system.

On a visit to Moscow, Hungarian Defence Minister Lajos Fur said, if Russia could not pay in cash, Hungary might look at the SZ-300.

Hungarian State Secretary of Defence Laszlo Szendrei denied to MAGYAR NEMZET that the ministry was negotiating to buy SZ-300s. They would need parliamentary or government clearance, and $900 million. But Hungary could use it, he said: Four SZ-300 systems would secure the country's anti-aircraft defences for 15 years.

Goncz Interviewed on 'State of Mind' of Country

AU2412130093 Budapest MTI in English 1111 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Budapest, December 24 (MTI)—Hungarian President Arpad Goncz gave an interview to the national daily, MAGYAR NEMZET, carried in the Christmas issue on December 24. As regards the mood and state of mind of the country, the president said:

I think that we have never before had such an unusual and extraordinary Christmas as this year. The death of Prime Minister Jozsef Antall, and his long and manly struggle with the illness, and the awareness of the entire country that Jozsef Antall would sooner or later pass

away... In essence this state had been going on for a year, as a consequence of which the deep shock and the national mourning shown for the prime minister was fully understandable.

In answer to what will follow in the life of Hungary after such a charismatic leader as Jozsef Antall, the president said:

The country's political structure has not changed, and in my view, parliament decided about the person of the new prime minister with imposing security and political maturity. I believe everyone is aware that nothing has collapsed, life goes on. Hungary's political order and democracy are firm, its system of institutions operates smoothly enough to withstand that even such a painful and unexpected death disrupt it. [sentence as received]

As to what can be expected from the new prime minister, Peter Boross, President Goncz said:

Obviously, this will result in a change in style. But I very much hope that the new prime minister, Peter Boross, will be able to accord to his very difficult task, to lead the country to the elections in a smooth manner, and to hand it over in an operating condition to his possible successor, irrespective of who that will be.

1994 Budget Bill Adopted After Debate

LD2412091993 Warsaw PAP in Polish 0833 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Warsaw, 24 Dec—After many hours of deliberations, late last night the government finally adopted next year's budget bill which does not depart much from the finance minister's original proposals. "It is a difficult budget but I think that the Sejm will pass it, although deputies are certain to introduce their own amendments," Deputy Prime Minister Marek Borowski told a Polish radio Third Program journalist.

"This budget is tight and must be implemented in a very disciplined manner. Economic policy next year should therefore be implemented in such a way as not to cause a greater inflation," Borowski stressed. According to the deputy prime minister, the budget deficit, amounting to 83 trillion zlotys, is "on the verge of being financed but the government intends to take certain measures so that further cuts are not necessary."

NATO Head on Pact, Russia, Polish Membership

WS2712123093 Warsaw TVP Television Second Program Network in Polish 2050 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Exclusive interview with NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner, by Marta Rumel in Brussels on the "Letters from Europe—Special Edition" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Rumel] Good morning Mr. Secretary General. We are very grateful to you for finding some time for us.

The Warsaw Pact has been dissolved which means that there is no threat whatsoever that Western Europe could be facing from the Pact. Have NATO's tasks and structures acquired a new meaning because of that?

[Woerner] Yes, NATO has been charged with two new significant tasks: First of all, instead of confrontations with countries of Central and Eastern Europe, NATO has embarked on the road of cooperation with those countries. Our other significant and new tasks also include strengthening stability in Central Europe, or even better—in Central and Eastern Europe. Our other task is participation in United Nations missions and also within the framework of the European Security and Cooperation Conference, I mean missions that secure peace. Apart from that, an old task still remains in force within the Transatlantic Pact which constitutes a forum for establishing Western policies and also for providing security to our member states taking into account dangers existing in any situation.

[Rumel] Currently NATO has 16 members. It was agreed during a recent meeting by NATO member states in Travemunde that no new country will be admitted as a NATO member in the years to come. Why is that?

[Woerner] Well, the decision is a new matter for me. The resolution should not be interpreted this way. I chaired the session, and I could say beyond any doubt that the truth is quite the opposite. Basically speaking, NATO is definitely ready to open itself up to new members, but it is a process that requires time, and that is why we agreed that we had to come up with a new initiative: Partnership in the Name of Peace within which we will establish cooperation with countries of Central and Eastern Europe to get them closer to NATO itself.

[Rumel] There is a view predominant in Poland that it will be admitted as a NATO member only if President Yeltsin consents to it. Would you like to present your position on the issue?

[Woerner] But of course. Such views are definitely false, and the following proposition is correct: Naturally, we also want to continue close cooperation with Russia—Russia becoming a country of a stable democracy is in our interest and also in the interest of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, including Poland. Therefore we will take justified Russian security interests into account but that does not mean we will make Russia a NATO member or that Russia will receive a right of veto in decisions made by the Alliance. We just want everything to proceed in such a way as to avoid a new division of Europe, and to create a new security system covering the whole of Europe.

[Rumel] Recent parliamentary elections in Poland were won by postcommunist parties. Could that fact be a reason for decreasing Poland's chances of becoming a NATO member?

[Woerner] No, definitely not. You cannot phrase it this way or talk about it in this manner. We are an alliance of democratic countries and we respect the results of democratic elections, not just in the countries which are our members, but naturally also with regard to our partners. That could change only if Poland were to deviate from the direction of democratic reforms but I do not expect that to happen, and I hope it will not happen.

[Rumel] The countries of Central and Eastern Europe fear a rebuilding of Russia's military potential which could also possibly be linked to rebuilding the Russian empire. Does not NATO's rejection of the Visegrad Group's efforts to join the Alliance make it easier for Russia to achieve military domination in Central and Eastern Europe?

[Woerner] I already explained that there was no such rejection. I think the question you asked is not justified. NATO continues to be the strongest alliance existing on earth, both politically and militarily. I think one of our functions is the continuous keeping of a balance of forces in Europe. I also do not think that Russia would like to dominate Central and Eastern Europe militarily now or in the near future. Such an attempt would be doomed to failure. Naturally, it would not be irrelevant to us but I think that the kind of cooperation we are striving for will allow us—like I already said—to build a security system where there would not be even any question of military domination.

[Rumel] Is NATO capable of effectively controlling the number of Russian nuclear weapons?

[Woerner] No, we are definitely not capable of doing that, but I think we cooperate with the Russians in that regard. We have information—moreover, we think we have reliable information—but you certainly cannot say we control the number of Russian nuclear weapons. That control is implemented by the Russians themselves. Naturally we hope—and we can therefore assume—that they observe the agreements they have signed, including disarmament agreements, and that they try first of all to keep nuclear weapons under control. That is in our interest, as well as theirs and the entire world's. We will provide assistance to the extent that they need it—by the way, we have already suggested that.

[Rumel] Are there plans to accept Russia and Ukraine as NATO members?

[Woerner] I do not think anyone has such plans right now or for the immediate future. I also do not think the Russians themselves want that. Right now this question is definitely not on the agenda, but we do want to continue developing our partnership precisely with Russia and also with Ukraine and other countries.

[Rumel] Mr. Secretary General, what is your assessment of the new Russian military doctrine?

[Woerner] I think there are some aspects of the doctrine that constitute progress with regard to defense armaments. The doctrine itself basically reduces Russia's military might. There are also other aspects with regard to which we still have some doubts. We agreed recently that Russia will provide us, that is NATO, with special information. We are expecting the arrival of a deputy minister in the Russian Defense Ministry who will inform us about the details of the new Russian military doctrine. We will exchange arguments with him, and I hope that his explanations will address our questions and our concerns about some points. We will definitely have to ask about the possible role of the Russian Armed Forces outside of Russia, and also about the main principles according to which Russia plans to use its Armed Forces. That is certainly the kind of concern that affects us, and we will talk to the Russians about it openly. Apart from that, we will also talk to them about our own military doctrine.

[Rumel] Does NATO not adopt the role of a European police force? Does its status allow the organization to fulfill such functions?

[Woerner] Now I have to ask you: What do you mean by police role? Like I said, we are a political and military alliance. I can imagine what you have in mind. We will certainly be trying to participate in resolving crisis situations. We will prevent conflicts from breaking out, if it is necessary. First of all, we will intervene when ordered by the United Nations, to force parties to reinstate peace, or to warn those who disturb it. We are also ready to involve ourselves deeply beyond our Alliance, just like we are doing currently in Yugoslavia—I mean former Yugoslavia—on United Nations' orders. Of course, these are not any police-type tasks and we certainly do not intend to consider such missions globally but rather we intend to limit our measures strictly to our European neighbors.

[Rumel] Mr. Secretary General, do you not think that the new European political order puts NATO's tasks and organizational structures into question? Perhaps NATO should be dissolved altogether and a new international military organization should be created which would be more suitable to the current realities?

[Woerner] Definitely not. That is simply because NATO will be used precisely to build such new structures. There is no alternative organization that could replace NATO. Like I said, we are definitely the strongest organization on this planet—militarily and politically speaking—which guarantees collective defense and security. We are probably also the only organization that really functions in practice and that means that all the tasks about which we just talked, can only be accomplished by an alliance like NATO. As proof of that, I would like to point out that very many of our partners—including Poland—want to join NATO and not other organizations. If NATO were to be dissolved, one would have to immediately reinstate it. That would make no sense at all and that is why NATO will continue in its new form and will continue readjusting. NATO's new form will definitely be a pillar—or a central structure if you like—or even the very fundamental basis of any all-European security system.

[Rumel] Thank you very much.

Oil Transit Agreement with Germany

LD2612194293 Warsaw PAP in English 1935 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Gdansk, Dec. 26— A contract between "Naftoport" of Gdansk and German petroleum importers, guaranteeing transit trans- shipments to Germany via Gdansk of 4 million tonnes of oil per annum, comes into effect on January 1, "Naftoport" Director Roman Binkowski told PAP on Sunday.

He added that there had also been negotiations with the German side over trans-shipments of up to 15 million tonnes a year to German refineries, which would require rebuilding of the oil terminal at the port of Gdansk. The port authorities believe that agreement on this could be reached by February 1994.

"Naftoport," established in July 1991, has the task of upgrading facilities at the oil terminal at the "Polnoc" (north) port in Gdansk, enabling supplies to be shipped into Poland rapidly from other sources if supplies from the former Soviet Union come under threat. The terminal is capable of handling 18 million tonnes of imported oil per year.

Talasiewicz on Border Cooperation with Germany

PM2312101593 Szczecin GLOS SZCZECINSKI in Polish 16 Dec 93 pp 1, 2

[Report by "LES": "Voivoda On Crossings: Yesterday's Press Conference"]

[Text] "As regards new nominations to the post of voivoda, our region is still in the dark," [incumbent Voivoda] Marek Talasiewicz told journalists gathered at yesterday's press conference. No decision has been made to date, so the present incumbent remain in office as usual. Last Monday and Tuesday [13 and 14 December] the voivoda attended a meeting of the Committee for Polish-German Border Cooperation, of which he is joint chairman.

The Committee has been active for more than two years now, and over that time the range of questions which it needs to address has expanded considerably. This was caused by the rapid and most dynamic development of border-zone contacts between Germans and Poles during that time. This development created and dictates the range of problems which must be attended to on a priority basis.

The first of these is the question of border crossings. Two new crossings are scheduled to open next year: Swinoujscie-Gartz and Dobieszczyn-Hintersee. There is also talk about the need to launch a ferry crossing in Gozdowice. We must open a number of new crossings, and we must also invest in them sufficiently so that they can perform their function successfully. However, there is no shortage of problems connected with these plans. The opening of the Dobieszczyn crossing will involve modernization of the transportation system on our side of the border. It is still not quite clear how we can reconcile the increased traffic load with the need to protect the Wkrzanska Forest nature reserve, or how we can resolve the difficulties which areas like Szczecin's district of Glebokie, as well as Tanowo and Police, will experience as a consequence. The voivoda announced that the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern premier offered us help and assistance in sorting out some of these problems. In addition, next year the Gryfino border crossing will open for so-called low-intensity tourist traffic. At present that crossing is used regularly by school students commuting to colleges in Gartz.

The system of the present transborder labor market requires urgent regulating measures. It will be necessary to coordinate Polish and German regulations concerning employment in that zone and to ensure that that local labor market does not present unfair competition to the domestic labor markets on both sides of the border.

The question of financial resources from the European Union continues to excite the highest interest on both sides. Over the next few years the Phare Fund will be able to yield 150 million ECU. What proportion of this sum will be allocated for ventures connected with the Polish-German transborder cooperation? Out of the several dozen applications submitted by both the Polish and the German side, a few of the best projects will be selected and passed on to Brussels.

The voivoda also gave reporters a statement concerning the stand which he proposes to take in respect of the written question submitted to the Sejm by Deputy Leszek Smykowski of the Confederation for an Independent Poland [KPN]. As the voivoda reminded his listeners, the question concerned police intervention during a strike by the MZUS work force and the reorganization of the Voivodship Office.

PUNR's Salagean Favors Vacaroiu's Resignation

AU2412092793 Bucharest ADEVARUL in Romanian 21 Dec 93 pp 1, 3

[Interview with Viorel Salagean, Romanian National Unity Party senator from Satu Mare, by Sergiu Andon; place and date not given: "Have the Transylvanians Lost Their Patience?"]

[Text] [Andon] Was the severe criticism leveled by Valer Suianu [Romanian National Unity Party-PUNR senator from Cluj] during the recent Parliament debate on the censure motion his own personal initiative or did it have the backing of a whole group within the PUNR?

[Salagean] Our parliamentary group and party leadership had three rounds of discussions, including the one that took place last Thursday [16 December] night, which lasted until 0200 hours. The idea of suggesting the resignation as the only reasonable solution for a compromised government almost got the upper hand. But at the last meeting on Friday [17 December] morning, what prevailed was the desire to preserve the party's position and characteristics, meaning that, while we disavow this government, we cannot accept a motion the drafting of which exhibits superficiality, haste, and political naivete.

[Andon] Can you be more concrete?

[Salagean] The statement that "reform has not yet begun" can only be endorsed by the ignorant. If we were to limit ourselves only to the institutional and legislative reforms and stability program of the Stolojan [former Prime Minister Theodor Stolojan] era, that statement still seems incorrect. Or the claim that "there is no political will to ensure the leu's convertibility." It is not the political will we are lacking, but the dollars!

[Andon] In your opinion, how many of your party colleagues have voted in favor of the motion?

[Salagean] I believe that 25-26 of the 43 PUNR parliamentarians voted for the motion. Of course, this is a mere supposition.

[Andon] Do you attach any political significance to the gesture of the five or six parliamentarians who left the hall before the ballot?

[Salagean] Yes, the significance of an embarrassing act of lack of discipline and seriousness. Nothing can justify their hurry to catch a train or plane when such important events are taking place in Parliament.

[Andon] Do you think that the members of other PDSR allies voted differently from the mainstream?

[Salagean] I am convinced that some of the Socialist Party of Labor [PSM] parliamentarians voted in favor of the motion and I do not exclude the possibility that some of the Greater Romania Party [PRM] parliamentarians, who are eagerly waiting for early elections, have done the same thing.

[Andon] It looks like the government's chances of survival were pretty precarious. How would you have proceeded in Vacaroiu's place?

[Salagean] A dignified solution would have been for him to submit his resignation and, as proof of his correctness, to brief Parliament on the results of his governing, as a kind of balance- sheet presentation. Thus, his government's real achievements would have been presented more credibly than in the detached and offensive manner in which they were actually rendered.

[Andon] Are you referring to a difference in style?

[Salagean] No, not only style, but also in dignity and modesty. One cannot ignore the fact that this government has been politically humiliated more than any other before it and that it has been under constant pressure. On the other hand, one cannot deny the fact that this government has also reached its limits of competence and is unable to offer anymore than it does right now, because of the lack of professional skills of its members and insufficient political support. All the political parties would have felt the shock of such a resignation, which would have made them reexamine their attitude toward basic problems, including the participation in working out realistic governing and anti-crisis programs. Parliament's attitude toward the avalanche of draft bills it has to cope with would also have changed. The resignation would also have had a great impact on the public at large, leading to a relaxation of trade union and labor tensions, and would also have proved internationally that Romania's political strength and flexibility is on a European maturity level.

[Andon] Do you not think that that would have been playing with fire, something a premier in office cannot afford?

[Salagean] Nothing would have been risked. The government would have continued carry out its duties until a successor was found or an interim prime minister was appointed, which might have been Nicolae Vacaroiu himself.

[Andon] In your opinion, what should a new government look like?

[Salagean] After three ultra-technocrat prime ministers, it would have been good to have a political figure of international caliber—such as Mircea Dan Popescu [minister of labor and social protection] or Adrian Nastase [speaker of the Chamber of Deputies]—at the head of the government, with a deputy in charge of implementing the reforms. This is a formula that has yielded results in the transition period in Argentina, Uruguay, and Mexico.

[Andon] And who might be the man in charge of the reform?

[Salagean] Mircea Cosea [chairman of the Council for Coordination, Strategy, and Economic Reform].

[Andon] PUNR's room for maneuver seems limited by the incompatibility of its ever acting in the same camp with the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania [UDMR].

[Salagean] The division with the UDMR exists and will always exist on a key issue, but, as everybody knows, that issue is neither economic nor social. Of course, in the current circumstances, PUNR will not accept entering a cabinet where UDMR is represented, but I do not dismiss coexistence as a means of solving certain economic an social problems or other links at the parliamentary level, which I actually consider absolutely necessary. Such coexistence existed in the Commission for Privatization and I believe that the two groupings can find a common denominator on many key laws of the reform process. If for nothing other than regional pride, that is out of the desire to jointly assert the enterprising spirit of Transylvanians.

PUNR Presents 'Crisis Program'

AU2312153693 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 0937 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 23/12/1993—"The Romanian National Unity Party (PUNR) does no longer support a monocolor executive team," said Ioan Gavra, vice-president of the PUNR at a press conference on Wednesday December 22. "At the time being, PUNR is a kind of referee in the political game. PUNR understands to be concerned not by backstage schemes or statement shelling but by concrete solutions to the problems facing Romania," PUNR leader said and further presented to the press the PUNR crisis program.

The 14-page document stipulates inter alia: "Imperative modules" chronically scheduled from six months to two years in sectorial and topical issues of the reform and also "directive modules" of four to eight years; the reform must be conducted and fulfilled by "a single executive power"; the reform must enjoy the fundamental political consensus on behalf of the parties backing the government, as well as of the opposition. The document also makes an evaluation of solutions and suggests new ones for the major politic, economic, financial, social problems.

The PUNR program underlines the necessity that a social pact be agreed by the government and the trade unions, that a legal framework be created for partnership between unions and employers organisations. The PUNR program propose also that a "poverty limit" be set and a national program to protect the poor.

The PUNR officials announced that the PUNR crisis program will be rendered to all the parliamentary parties and to the Romanian Government.

Nastase Believes Government Reshuffle Necessary

AU2312162793 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1430 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES, 23/12/1993—The executive president of the ruling Party of Social Democracy of Romania (PDSR) and speaker of the Romanian Chamber of Deputies, Adrian Nastase said in an interview granted to the daily CRONICA ROMANA that "the engines of the reform and of the transition have been powered on" in Romania but a government reshuffle was a must of the present political moment.

"We are before the moment when the airplane of the reform and transition in Romania must gain additional impetus. They are certainly many those who wish to get on board and that explains, perhaps, the competition for ruling," Speaker Adrian Nastase said.

Commenting the offer made by the opposition Democratic Convention of Romania (CDR), Adrian Nastase said: "We are still waiting for a clear and direct offer from the CDR which so far has just sent out some signals through the press. We must clarify some issues with the Romanian National Unity Party (PUNR) and have talks with our allies, the Socialist Party of Labour (PSM), the Greater Romania Party (PRM), and the Agrarian Democratic Party (PDAR), in order to see what way we should go in the months to follow."

Asked to comment the choices considered by the ruling party, Adrian Nastase said: "I believe the coming period will be extraordinary difficult for the PDSR in point of option... We do not rule out any alternative. The worst for us would be to stay at the helm, which would mean the further erosion of our political capital."

PDSR Executive President Nastase categorically supports a change of the current government pattern: "In my opinion, the government reshuffle is a necessity. Certain secretaries of state have imperatively to be changed and an increase of the efficiency of this executive team must be achieved through the removal of some top office holders."

At the end of the interview, Adrian Nastase said he was not tempted by the office of prime minister and opined that for the time to come the executive would still need as its chief a person "capable to manage the economic problems."

Iliescu Begins Inter-Party Talks With PDAR's Surdu

AU2712125793 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1100 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] This morning, at Cotroceni Palace, Romanian President Ion Iliescu began his rounds of talks with leaders of political parties represented in parliament. The talks began shortly after 1000 [0800 GMT], with representatives of the Democratic Agrarian Party of Romania [PDAR]. Attending were PDAR leader Victor

Surdu, senators and members of the PDAR leadership, as well as presidential counselors Traian Chebeleu and Paul Dobrescu.

During a morning program of our radio, Dobrescu said that the goal of these talks is to find out the parties' points of view regarding the current situation of the country and the necessary political steps to better it and the elaboration of a political pact and a minimum platform that should be assumed by each political grouping, regardless of its orientation. Considering the fact that each party has reasserted its support for reform, the continuation of that process might be included in the set of joint options of the pact, Dobrescu assessed.

The presidency also hopes that the parties would support the rapid sanctioning by parliament of the stipulations of the memorandum signed with the International Monetary Fund.

A new government formula or a possible alliance [with the opposition] could be the result of discussions and agreements between the various parties, but that issue is merely a secondary goal of the talks, Dobrescu pointed out.

Some of the political groupings that have accepted the president's invitation to participate in the talks have not yet announced the precise date of the meeting, and therefore it may be assessed that many rounds of the talks will take place after 1 January.

The presidency expects that the parties should come up with constructive points of view and well-defined opinions to achieve a stabilization of the country's political life, the elimination of artificial tensions, the continuation and speeding up of the reform process, and the economic recovery of the country, Dobrescu concluded.

Currently, Iliescu's talks with PDAR representatives are still in progress. In the afternoon, at about 1700 [1500 GMT] Iliescu is scheduled to meet with representatives of the Democratic Party- National Salvation Front and, at about 1830, with leaders of the Romanian Social-Democratic Party.

National Bank Outlines New Monetary Policies

AU2412193193 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1408 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES, 24/12/1994—The Board of Directors of the National Bank of Romania (BNR) examined in its 22 December meeting the monetary policy measures meant to stop the inflationist trend, to discourage the "dollarisation" of the national economy and to stabilise the leu-dollar rate of exchange in the near future.

Among other steps to be taken, the National Bank approved the principles of financial prudence and surveillance of the merchant banks, as well as the criteria for the limitation of hard currency positions of banking companies.

BNR approved a package of measures intended for the growth in 1994 of Romania's national reserves. It was remarked that although Romania's gold reserves had constantly grown over the past years, from 67.6 tonnes at the end of 1989 to 73.5 tonnes at present, that is by the equivalent of about one billion dollars at the price of gold on the international market, yet it was absolutely necessary for the National Bank of Romania to pursue the restoration of the national reserves of the Romanian state equal to the equivalent value of Romania's imports over 2 to 3 months.

Daily Warns Against Underestimating Zhirinovskiy

AU2312213193 Bucharest ROMANIA LIBERA in Romanian 21 Dec 93 p 1

[Octavian Paler editorial: "At the Beginning, It Is Only a Mistake"]

[Excerpts] The difference between brilliant madmen, without whom the museums and libraries of the world would have been much poorer than we can imagine, and the madmen who only induce our pity and eventually the desire to avoid them, can only be emphasized by inventing different terms for different forms of "madness." [passage omitted]

Unfortunately, the paranoiacs who dabble in politics are still left to do their things unchecked. Hitler practically said from the very beginning what he intended to do. But Western diplomacy, used to hypocrisy, did not take his deranged frankness seriously. It did not believe that Hitler would actually stick to his word. And, as everybody knows, this mistake was dearly paid later, with millions of dead and a lot of suffering. But it seems that Western diplomacy has not learned much from that tragic lesson. [passage omitted]

My impression is that it is now trying to deceive itself again. After the first shock of the elections in Russia, Western diplomacy has hurried to sigh with relief at the fact that the ultranationalist epigone of Hitler—who scared so many with his belligerent statements—does not hold the majority in the Duma, as initially thought. In my opinion, this is but a small consolation. [passage omitted]

A serious truth is hidden behind Zhirinovskiy's [Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia] caricature-like appearance. Namely, that millions of Russians have laid more emphasis on pride than on democracy. [passage omitted]

I fear that beyond Zhirinovskiy's clowning, one can discover the old and serious Russian pan-Slavism, which is anti-Western and eager for expansion. This is the only explanation for the fact that so many Russians, who sincerely hated Hitler, were not at all upset by Zhirinovskiy's weakness for Hitler. Maybe they interpret it as a translation of "Deutschland ueber alles" ["Germany above everything else"] into "Russland ueber alles"

["Russia above everything else"]. Zhirinovskiy's insolent and apparently comical babbling about expanding to the East, all the way to the Indian Ocean, should normally wake up the West from its narrow and lazy pragmatism, when it comes to understanding their own mistakes. [passage omitted]

As for the comparisons made with our own extremists, they seem a bit forced. Not because Prime Minister Nicolae Vacaroiu's allies would be more acceptable than their colleagues in the West, but rather because beyond the demagogy of our extremists, you can find no idea at all, be it even a fuzzy one, and no aspiration either, be it even demented. As a matter of fact, our extremists do not believe in anything. They simply trade with confiscated feelings, which can bring them personal profit. Their agitation is limited to the pleasure of hating publicly, to making a career out of rudeness, and to further infecting an atmosphere which is already becoming more and more stifling.

Melescanu on Ties With United States, Russia

AU2412193293 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1106 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES, 24/12/1994—In an interview granted to the daily CRONICA ROMANA, Romania's Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu makes a review of the priorities in the Romanian diplomacy, of the results scored during his recent visit to the United States, of ties with Russia and the chance to find solutions to the issue regarding the group of Romanian patriots, victims of a mock trial staged by the authorities of a so-called Dniester republic.

"For us, as a European country, the European Union is obviously a most important pole economically, but politically and as regards security, today's world cannot be viewed without fine ties with the most important state from a military point of view, the United States of America. My opinion is that we can talk about two poles around which the fundamental idea of Romania's Euro-Atlantic integration is gravitating," Melescanu said.

Related to the results scored during his visit to the United States, the Romanian foreign minister said: "The American Administration wanted the message concerning its ties with Romania that entered normality as clearly perceived and I would say more, in a period when collaboration is tight... Romania's security will enter from now on America's concern, and that was the second major message of the visit... Another message which I figure as the most important one was that green light, as the Americans call it, for the involvement of the Administration, of American companies at large in growing economic ties with Romania".

"The relationship with Russia obviously remains a most important one for Romania... Unfortunately, developments in the Russian Federation have delayed efforts to bring bilateral ties back to normality. Now the key-element that has 'blocked that mechanism' which we were trying to establish was undoubtedly 'the Ilascu case,'" Melescanu said.

Stating that "not all responsibility" devolves entirely on Russia as regards that issue, the Romanian top diplomat stressed, however, that the presence of the 14th Army in the Republic of Moldova ("like an umbilical cord for economic and financial survival of the departments that are contesting the constitutional authority at Chisinau"), turns Russia into an extremely influential element on the separatist leaders. In the context, Foreign Minister Melescanu hinted at the idea of a potential positive sign in the following days, and even of a solution as regards the Ilascu group.

Additional Trade Protocol With EC Signed

AU2412193093 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1524 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES, 24/12/1994—The "Additional Protocol on the Trade and Trade-Related Aspects Between Romania on the One Hand, and the European Economic Community and the European Steel and Coal Community on the other, as well as the European Agreement Between Romania, the European Community and its Member States" was signed in Brussels.

The protocol provides for a relaxation of import restrictions for Romanian industrial and agricultural goods on the European Union markets. Romanian goods will benefit from a phased out liberalisation of prices. For example, customs dues for industrial goods, except for textiles and steel products, will be completely removed in a time interval shorter than provided in the association agreement and the interim accord.

The European Community has eased import conditions for Romanian goods unilaterally, without reciprocal obligations for the Romanian side, according to the principle of "asymmetry of concessions" which lay at the basis of the negotiations of the European agreements with "the six." Their overt purpose is to support the efforts made by the new democracies to modernise their economies and shorten the period of transition to a market economy.

Izetbegovic: No Reason for Optimism at Talks

AU2412211893 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Statement by Alija Izetbegovic, president of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency, given upon "the return from peace negotiations in Brussels"; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] As you know, Europe actually posed seven demands toward Bosnia-Herzegovina. The first demand was that we all agree to a cease-fire until 15 January, the second to secure free passage for convoys and undertake this obligation permanently, and the third that all sides acknowledge the internal partitioning of Bosnia-Herzegovina, that is, the division of the Bosnia-Herzegovina territory. You know that at the end an opinion has prevailed that Bosnia-Herzegovina should be a union, therefore, remain undivided as a union but consist of three republics, out of which the Bosnian republic would have 33.3 percent of the territory, the Croatian republic 17.5 percent of the territory, and the Serbian republic some 50 percent of the territory. Europe, that is to say, the Twelve, further demanded that we accept UN administration of the town of Sarajevo and European Union administration of Mostar. Finally, it was demanded that everybody embraces the solution according to which the Bosnian republic would have access to the sea near Neum, in accordance with the proposal offered aboard the ship Invincible. As you know, we had not accepted this proposal then and, therefore, we did not accept it on this occasion either. However, let me remind you that the proposal in question envisaged that the Bosnian republic be guaranteed certain territory on the island of Klek and access to that territory, that is to say, that area, in order to build a harbor. Finally, the last, seventh demand referred to the opening of Tuzla airport.

They asked us whether we accept this. Out of these seven demands we accepted six. We declined to accept the solution in Neum, the way it had been proposed aboard the ship Invincible and which I have just explained. The Croats initially rejected the European Union administration of Mostar; however, subsequently, at Europe's insistence, they withdrew their rejection and accepted the European Union administration of Mostar, naturally, as a temporary solution.

The Serbian side, however, rejected two proposals. It rejected the UN administration of Sarajevo and the opening of Tuzla airport. Regarding the issue of Sarajevo, we debated all of yesterday, we tried to find some sort of solution for Sarajevo until late last night. The cochairmen tried to find a formula that would be acceptable for the Serbs to agree to UN presence and administration of Sarajevo as a temporary solution. However, such a solution was not found. Regarding Tuzla airport, the Serbs remained intransigent in not allowing the opening of Tuzla airport, not even for humanitarian purposes.

An incident has occurred in connection with this, that is, a situation emerged at the meeting with the European Union. On that occasion very harsh words were exchanged regarding this. Chairman of the Twelve, Belgian [Foreign] Minister [Willy Claes] reprimanded Karadzic and Milosevic for this stubbornness regarding Tuzla airport with the sharpest words; however, no change was forthcoming.

I can say that in its failure to convince the Serbian side about Sarajevo and especially about Tuzla airport, Europe has shown its weakness. This is my overall impression. It means either a lack of power or a lack of determination. This is, of course, not the place and the time to analyze this, I merely state it. I have come to give a statement and I can not venture into any sort of analysis as to where this originates from or to explain this phenomenon; however, in any case this is lack of determination on the part of Europe to tackle this issue, to say the least. Namely, Europe is simply not doing anything to force, for example, the Serbian side to lift its veto on such a reasonable and justified demand as the opening of an airport for humanitarian aid. Therefore, on this occasion we did not succeed. Whether we will succeed the next time, I do not know.

Speaking of the next time, I must say that we negotiated all of yesterday. We did not achieve much progress. The only thing that we concluded was to meet again on 15 January to try and resolve the remaining problems. The 33.3 percent of the territories that would belong to the Bosnian republic we have in principle accepted quantity-wise, however, quality-wise we are not satisfied with the territories offered and that is what we discussed all of yesterday. I could even say that a few steps back have been made in comparison to the maps that had been drawn. Namely, the Serbian side has changed its position about Brcko. It would no longer give the town of Brcko. After lengthy debates it has agreed to leave Brcko harbor to us, however, we did not accept this and the matter ended up with the formation of a working group that will study this issue. I could say that a step back was also made regarding the railroad junction in Doboj, which was originally supposed to be totally under our control, but this is again doubtful now and a sort of technical solution is being sought for it. Finally, in central Bosnia the Croatian side has put forward additional demands regarding Kiseljak and Kresevo.

This has all created a new situation and, naturally, we cannot be sure about anything. Regarding security, I can say that only what our Army holds and defends is safe.

We have, naturally, accepted the cease-fire and we will respect it as much as possible, which means that if we are not attacked we will try to observe the cease-fire. However, I would like to repeat that we can only rely on our Army, this is, let me say, my impression after the talks. In brief, a conclusion from all this is that there is no reason for any great optimism, at least I have not found any.

Karadzic, Krajisnik on Muslim Position at Talks

LD2612181593 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1657 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Sarajevo, 26 Dec (TANJUG)—At the last round of Geneva negotiations we put forward a joint Serbo-Croat proposal on a map for the Muslim state in order to make it easier for the Muslims to sign the peace plan and to restore peace, president of the republic of Srpska Radovan Karadzic stated at a news conference today.

"This proposal, however, was not accepted by the Muslims, not even by the European Union [EU], and we have been compelled to consider this proposal rejected in full, by which our agreement with the Croats on 17.5 per cent of the territory for Herceg-Bosna becomes invalid, even more so as the Croats are losing their territory to the Muslims, and we are not able to provide compensation for their losses," Karadzic said.

"In a way this proposal is still on the table and unless the Muslim side accepts it in the near future and signs peace, it will have to conduct negotiations on a completely different basis—in effect it will be the current state of affairs in the field," the president of the republic of Srpska said.

"We condemn the European Union not only for causing chaos in Yugoslavia, not only for causing the war in Bosnia, but also for prolonging the war. Without the support from the European Union, the Muslim side would not be so persistent in refusing to sign a peace accord and it would accept the only honorable solution," Karadzic believes.

Assessing the results of the latest summit, Momcilo Krajisnik, president of the people's assembly of the republic of Srpska, said that at the latest round of Geneva negotiations the Serbian side experienced "a kind of pressure in own right, i.e. blackmail from the European Union, which in an ultimatum-like manner made it clear that the Serb side had to give big concessions if it wanted peace—the Muslims must be given 33.3 per cent of the territory—it was the last concession demanded from the Serbs so that the Muslims should get their state and that peace should be restored."

According to Krajisnik, it was very difficult to find such concessions and offer such a plan. But, thanks to huge efforts made by the cochairmen, the Croatian and the Serbian sides, we succeeded in it and we thought that by it we have finalized the uproar about the creation of a Muslim state, Krajisnik said.

"Both we and all those who wanted to achieve peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina believe we have been deceived because the EU has failed to honor what it had obliged itself to honor. The Muslims have not been blamed for rejecting the plan, and have even been encouraged to think up fresh demands—demands which they are sure the Serbs will not be able to accept. We believe that we have fully complied with everything which the international community and our people expected of us in order to achieve peace and the lifting of the sanctions and we are no longer duty-bound to make any concessions either to the Muslim or to the Croat side," Krajisnik said.

"We are in favor of talks—we must negotiate—but we believe the Serbs cannot make concessions which would imperil their republic, its continuity and its ability to function. It must be made clear to the Muslims that the Serbs have not made concessions because they were blackmailed but in order to achieve a cease-fire and the establishment of peace," Krajisnik said.

Replying to a question as to what, in fact, the essence of the forthcoming meeting scheduled for 15 January in Geneva is, the president of the republic of Srpska assessed that the essence is based on what had been done so far [sentence as received].

"The cochairmen have made great efforts to achieve a solution—we do not have any objections here. Attempts have been made to resolve the issue of Sarajevo and the Serbian side was to have accepted UN control over Sarajevo, while the Muslim side was to have allowed part of Sarajevo to belong to the republic of Srpska. If this second condition is met, we will accept a temporary UN administration. What is certain is that we will not give up the Serbian part of Sarajevo—whether it is under UN control or not, and I believe that no part of the republic of Srpska will be administered by anyone else," Karadzic said, adding that before 15 January he would be demanding from the Muslim side a clear statement as to whether they accept the map.

"This is a key question for us. If they do not accept it, the purpose of the meeting scheduled for 15 January will merely be to establish whether this map is to be accepted or not. As far as we are concerned, there is no point taking the negotiations further because there can be no more concessions whatsoever," Karadzic stressed.

Asked about the Serbian reaction if the international community continued to exert pressure on the Serbian side, Karadzic said that this was nothing new and that the Serbs were getting used to pressure.

"We will continue our policy of protecting the vital interests of the Serbian people regardless of the pressure, because we have a right to protect our principal interests. All in all, the Muslims are losing the support of the international community and even of some Islamic countries. However, Germany and some circles in France are supporting the unrealistic Muslim demands, thus prolonging the war," Karadzic said.

Replying to a question on whether the change of the EU presidency on 1 January, when Greece takes over, will have a positive impact on the resolution of the Bosnian crisis, the republic of Srpska president expressed his belief that Greece was a devoted friend of Serbia and the Serbian people.

"However Greece will have little say over the EU standpoints regarding the war in Bosnia. It must be openly

said that the EU is an expanded Germany and that Germany is the main factor in the Union. Greece will try to improve the Union's standpoints on Serbia but Germany will try to obstruct and delay the resolution until 1 July when it takes over the EU presidency and then the balance of power will be shifted, because Germany will abuse its position in the EU," Karadzic said.

Asked if perhaps the unification of Serbian lands was the way to protect Serbian interests, Karadzic said that the unification was inevitable.

"This is a historical and political imperative and there is no stability in the Balkans until the Serbian issue has been resolved in a fair way. If international factors continue to work towards the erosion of the Serbian national entity, the self-defensive reaction by the Serbian people will be our entire unification. For such a goal we shall have historical and political justification, and will also have the support of the wiser part of the international community which is aware of the danger posed by the great German Europe," Karadzic said.

Explaining ultimatums and raised tones of voice in discussions at the latest summit, Karadzic said: "Willy Claes and Alain Juppe spoke in an inappropriate way for diplomats. They addressed the Serbian side in a way which we cannot accept from anyone—they gave us five-minute deadlines to make our decisions on some very important steps. We refused to do so and replied in very sharp tones. So there was sharpness on both sides, but the Serbian sharpness was a reaction to theirs and hence it was justified."

After he had noted that the Serbian negotiating team would inform deputies of the people's assembly of the republic of Srpska about everything that happened at the latest summit, Krajisnik announced that the assembly would hold a session in the next seven to eight days at which a platform for future negotiations is to be drawn up.

Assessing the current situation on the battlefield, Karadzic said that the Muslim offensive on the Sarajevo battlefield—launched ahead of the summit—had now been crushed and that the Croats in central Bosnia knew best how the Muslims were observing the Christmas truce.

"The Muslim offensive against Croat areas shows that the Muslim side does not consider any Christian holiday a holy thing. Our experience teaches us the same—we are expecting repeated attacks from the Muslim side before and in the course of the coming Serbian holidays," Karadzic said.

Krajisnik: Milosevic Role in Talks 'Very Positive'

AU2412215093 Belgrade RTB Television Network in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] This evening, immediately upon their return from Brussels, Radovan Karadzic, president of the republic of Srpska, and Momcilo Krajisnik, chairman of the republic of Srpska assembly, visited the exhibition about the economy of the Serbian republics in Belgrade's Hotel Jugoslavija. After visiting the exhibition stalls, Karadzic and Krajisnik conveyed their impressions at an improvised news conference. What the businessmen have accomplished throughout all this time speaks of the sound economy in the Serbian Krajinas, whose significance will only become clear after the war.

[Begin recording of Sasa Barbulovic video report] [Barbulovic] Presenting his vision of the development of events after the rejection by the Muslim delegation of the joint offer by the Croatian and the Serbian side that fully satisfies the Muslim interests, President Karadzic stated that the international community now must change its attitude toward the Serbian side by which the Muslim leadership would lose support for the continuation of the war.

[Karadzic] We have some indication that the international community is dropping further support for the Muslims. We do not wish the Muslim people to suffer, we want them to settle and calm down in their own state so that we could be good neighbors. I believe that further pressure for the lifting of sanctions against Yugoslavia will grow, not merely from Greece, Russia, and FRY neighboring countries, but also from some European counties. I believe that we can expect this. Naturally, we can also expect that the Muslim leadership will continue with the offensive in Sarajevo and elsewhere and prepare for a spring offensive.

[Barbulovic] Momcilo Krajisnik, chairman of the Serbian Republic Assembly, said that the Serbian delegation departed for Geneva with optimism. A joint appearance of the Serbian and the Croatian side has discharged the fundamental reason for which the Muslim delegation could have rejected the signing of the peace plan. However, Krajisnik said, this proposal was ignored with the support of invisible centers from the West.

Krajisnik assessed that the current Muslim leadership is not in a position to bring the war to an end. He issued an appeal to the Muslim people to denounce such a policy:

[Barbulovic] How do you view the role of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic in the Geneva-Brussels talks?

[Krajisnik] Mr. Milosevic, just as so far, has participated very actively in our talks and his assistance has been great. He can play an important role in the future, too, because with his authority he can influence the Croatian policy considerably, namely, Mr. Tudjman respects this very much and the previous talks were actually held mostly on the relation Mr. Tudjman-Mr. Milosevic.

We are happy that President Milosevic is taking part in these talks and we are pleased when these talks take place. In a way we also felt protected—this has often been the case—as with his authority and role he assists these talks considerably.

[Barbulovic] Here in Serbia some political parties—Mr. Seselj [president of the Serbian Radical Party] to be precise—have claimed that the presence of President Milosevic has harmed the talks.

[Krajisnik] We are truly trying to distance ourselves from the disputes between the parties in Serbia as much as possible as they are all Serbs. Our great desire is that a party and national reconciliation takes place. However, the role of Mr. Milosevic was very positive and we must be very grateful to him. Finally, our people through their assembly and legal representatives have explicitly stressed this on several occasions. [end recording]

Mladic Reportedly Wounded While Inspecting Troops

LD2312221693 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 2112 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Belgrade, 23 Dec (TANJUG)—General Ratko Mladic, the commander of the main headquarters of the army of the republic of Srpska, was wounded in the course of his inspection of the Romania Corps' front line toward Muslim-held Olovo, claims tomorrow's [24 December] issue of BORBA, citing sources from the 1991-92 Veterans' Association. According to eyewitness reports, Gen. Mladic was hit by two rifle rounds. He received the first blow in the chest but, thanks to his bullet-proof vest, this was not fatal. The second round, however, struck him in, the paper says, "the place where the backbone loses its honorable name." The bandaged commander, the paper adds, did not wish to be hospitalized but remained at his post.

Serbs Deny Wounding

LD2412193893 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1005 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Zvornik, 24 Dec (TANJUG)—The commander of the main headquarters of the army of the republic of Srpska [VRS], General Ratko Mladic, has not been wounded, the Chief of General Staff of the main headquarters of the VRS, Major General Manojlo Milovanovic, told TANJUG's correspondent today. He explained that the "fabrication about Gen. Mladic being wounded during his visit to the Romanija region was published with clearly malicious intent."

"Alive and in good health, Gen. Mladic is currently visiting VRS positions, the frontline itself, but not in the Romanija region which he has not toured recently," Gen. Milovanovic underlined. He added that "a sense of professionalism should prod editorial offices into double-checking the authenticity of the information they are publishing, if they are genuinely interested in the truth". [passage omitted]

Serbs in Sarajevo Repel 'Powerful' Muslim Attack

LD2712114393 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 0937 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Bratunac, Zvornik, 27 Dec (TANJUG)—Continuing their offensives and military activities, Muslim units have not halted their violation of the latest cease-fire, a TANJUG correspondent has learned from senior officials in the army of the republic of Srpska [VRS].

Over the past 24 hours attacks by Muslim units on Serb settlements and VRS positions throughout the former Bosnia-Herzegovina have continued. At the same time the settling of scores between Muslims and Croats in central Bosnia has not ceased, and fighting has intensified in the Neretva valley.

A powerful Muslim attack from the direction of Tuzla on Serb settlements and defense lines on Majevica [mountain to the northeast of Tuzla] went on throughout last night. Banj hill in particular was the target of exceptionally powerful Muslim artillery and infantry fire. VRS fighters, forced to respond, took resolute and precise action, so that artillery attacks from Muslim positions ceased early this morning, though their infantry actions did not.

It was a similar picture in the Sarajevo area where VRS fighters last night repelled a powerful Muslim attack on Grbavica in which mortars and light weapons were used.

There were also military actions by Muslim units against the Serb side along almost all other demarcation lines. [passage omitted]

Serbian Offensive Reported

AU2412153593

[Editorial Report] Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian at 1400 GMT on 24 December carries in its regular 32-minute newscast several updated reports on the fighting in the republic. Reception is poor.

Describing the situation in Sarajevo, Samra Subasic reports from the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army 1st Corps Press Center that "this is the fourth day of the all-out Chetnik attack on the city, and the aggressor's artillery has not for a moment stopped firing deadly missiles. Throughout the day howitzers, tanks, cannons, self-propelled [samohodka; not further specified], Praga, and mortars of all calibers have been pounding the defense lines and the city quarters. Zuc and parts of the free Vogosca territory are again today exposed to the fiercest fire. The Chetniks are trying to break through the Zuc defense lines with combined infantry and artillery attacks, but are again suffering heavy defeats and having to retrun to their initial positions. Twice today in the region of Zivkovice and Bukusa, the aggressor used chemical agents for temporary disablement, but fortunately without consequences." The reports says that

"when they do not manage to achieve something on the front line, the Chetniks always turn their guns at the civilian targets. So today from Borije, (?Tukovi), (?Pretrpine), Mrkovici, and (?Tromolj) they fired the heaviest caliber shells and missiles from multiple rocket launchers at the city itself—(?Toplane), the Kosevo hospital, Alipasino Polje, Sokolje, Brijesce, Barice, Kobilja Glava, Bosanska and Zagorska streets."

Sarajevo Remains Without Electricity

AU2712112293 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 0900 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Even today, the aggressor's side would not allow the teams of Elektroprenos to go out and repair damage to the power line. Sarajevo will, thus, be without electricity today, we have learned from the information service of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Electricity Board.

Despite the lack of electricity, Velepekara baked bread for 31 local communities in the town last night. Bread will also be delivered to all hospitals, soup kitchens, Red Cross kitchens, and dormitories. The problem of the lack of water, which must be distributed by water tankers, remains. In this way [words indistinct] hardy exists. The bread, therefore, does not meet all the standards of quality. For this reason the incumbent in Velepekara [words indistinct] UN High Commissioner for Refugees to overcome these problems as quickly as possible.

Humanitarian Aid Convoy Arrives in Sarajevo

AU2512154393 Paris AFP in English 1530 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Sarajevo, Dec 25 (AFP)—A humanitarian aid convoy arrived here Saturday [25 December] for the first time in a week, a spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced. Bosnian Serb forces cut off roads to Sarajevo a week ago barring all relief shipments by one route from the Bosnian capital. The blockade was lifted after lengthy negotiations and a 13-truck convoy arrived in Sarajevo with 130 tonnes of food, mattresses and 60 tonnes of fuel oil, UNHCR spokesman Ray Wilkinson told AFP.

Earlier Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, the archbishop of Paris, celebrated midnight mass here, telling the citizens of this war-scarred city that the world was praying for them. Sarajevo Archbishop Vinko Puljic, who led the mass jointly with Lustiger, also prayed for Jesus to put an end to the 20-month war.

Speaking as a Christmas truce was blatantly ignored in the region, leaving three people dead here and a French UN soldier killed elsewhere Friday, Lustiger told Sarajevans they should never give up hope of peace. "There is never a situation which cannot be resolved, there is always a way," he told the packed congregation in the small cathedral in the city's old town, in a message of "consolation and hope."

"I must ... beg your forgiveness for not having come to Sarajevo earlier, and perhaps ask you also to forgive all the bishops in western Europe who have not been able to visit you," he said. But he added: "You have not been forgotten; many are praying for you." The two churchmen's comments were heard by up to 600 people crammed into the tiny cathedral, most of them from the city's Catholic Croat community, which numbers about 30,000.

Members of other ethnic groups were also present, as was the tradition before the war. French, Canadian and Slovak members of the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) could also be seen among the congregation. [passage omitted] French Defense Minister Francois Leotard said Saturday French troops would remain deployed in the former Yugoslavia "as long as their mission has not been accomplished."

"We left Somalia and Cambodia because our missions were accomplished. As long as the mssion is not accomplished in the former Yugoslavia, we will stay," Leotard said speaking to journalists during a visit to Velika Kladusa in the Moslem-populated Bihac pocket on the Croatian border. "Women, children, civilians, entire towns are being protected by French soldiers," he added.

Sarajevo Radio Reports Widespread Fighting

AU2712104693

[Editorial Report] Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian at 0900 GMT and 1000 GMT on 27 December carries the following fighting reports:

Correspondent from Olovo Amira Salihbasic reports that "the siege of the town continues with unabated intensity." She says that "the enemy has been attacking the entire line of defense with all available arms" until late last night. She adds that the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army units have also been attacked with guided missiles fired from helicopters. According to her, "approximately 50 projectiles have landed on civilian targets, luckily without any consequences for human lives." "The 50th day of the offensive has not dawned in peace either. The shelling started at 0600 GMT this morning with [word indistinct] from infantry arms along the entire line of the front, which has remained unchanged."

An unidentified correspondent reporting from the Press Center of the 3d Corps of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army says "the Ustashas used a brief lull over the Christmas holidays to prepare for a new offensive on Busovaca-Vitez battlefield. The attacks of Boban's and Tudjman's troops also continued in the Gornji Vakuf area, while the combined artillery-infantry attack in direction Fojnica-Kiseljak ended with the defeat of the extremists. Since yesterday, the Ustashas have been attacking our defense lines in Vitez constantly, most ferociously in the area of Crveni Potok, where they have attempted an infantry breakthrough that did not go beyond mere attempt," the correspondent reports.

"Our fighters repelled an attack of the Ustasha infantry in Zacelje. From the relay station in Novi Travnik the Ustasha artillery was attacking Opara and [word indistinct]. In a decisive counterattack our fighters broke the Ustashas' lines in two places, [words indistinct] Lucic and [word indistinct] Radenovici on the Busovaca battlefield and on that occasion liquidated eight Ustashas and injured several of them."

"On the Fojnica-Kiseljak battlefield," the dispatch goes on, "the Ustashas fired more than 200 projectiles that mostly landed on Smajlovici and Bilalovac. The civilian targets in Fojnica were shelled for the fourth day in a row. After three days, the Ustashas yesterday repeated a combined tank-infantry attack, supported by artillery, in Orahovo area, in the direction Oglavak-Brajlovici-Duke. This repeated attack was also repelled. In this area the fighters of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army broke through the Ustasha lines in Oglavak and liquidated some ten Ustashas, seized a considerable quantity of light and heavy arms, as well as great quantity of ammunition."

The announcer in the studio reports that "Sarajevo has been shaking with fierce explosions since early morning. The free Vogosca territory (?and Zuc) especially have been the targets of the aggressor's heavy artillery." The announcer adds that "this fierce cannonade this morning was an overture to an infantry breakthrough. The Chetniks twice attacked Sjenicka [word indistinct] with infantry, however our brave fighters on both occasions repelled the attacks and threw the enemy back to his initial positions."

Correspondent Fazlo Dervisbegovic says that "a fierce Ustasha offensive at Dreznica, its inhabitants, and the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, which lasted for a full 13 days, has been completely crushed. The defenders of the free Dreznica territory, brave fighters of the 1st Battalion of the 47 Hill Brigade, and (?Zulfikar) special brigade of the Headquarters of the Supreme Command, have broken the offensive of the Croatian Army and the so-called Croatian Defense Council, chasing them in panic flight deep back to their territory." As Dervisbegovic says, "50 soldiers were liquidated" in the battles on (?Karamanovi Klanci), Javorac, and [word indistinct]. He reports that "one Bosnia-Herzegovina Army soldier has died and two sustained lighter injuries" in the battles.

Muslim Attacks on Croatian Enclaves Reported

LD2612163993 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1600 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Dispatch by reporter Zdenko Vranjes]

[Excerpt] This morning the Muslim army launched fresh artillery and infantry attacks on the northern part of the Vitez area. The attacks have been accompanied by shelling of civilian targets in Vitez town center and surrounding villages. We have not yet received any details about the consequences of the attacks but we have just learned from the Croatian Defense Council [HVO] operational zone in Vitez that HVO units managed to repel the infantry attacks.

A general alert was sounded this morning in Kiseljak, Kresevo, and Novi Travnik. Muslim forces are pounding these areas with mortars and artillery. We have received a report from Busovaca that a strong attack was launched on the town's defense lines at 1435. The town center is being fiercely shelled. [passage omitted]

Over 30 Croats Killed

LD2512235993 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 2300 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] This Christmas morning was surprisingly quiet throughout the entire Lasva valley in central Bosnia. Following the failure of a Muslim attempt last night to advance from Stari Vitez, the Croat Defense Council [HVO] Command in Vitez says that the Christmas eve and Christmas saw only sporadic aggressor provocations from infantry weapons.

All front lines in the Vitez area are quiet too. The HVO caution nevertheless that the Muslim army is concentratiung fresh forces around all the besieged Croat enclaves in central Bosnia so they expect a new round of heavy attacks. The Vitez HVO Command particularly stress the defenders' success in foiling the Muslim army's attempt to take Vitez on Christmas and cut the Lasva Valley's defense in two and take control of the explosives and gunpowder factory in Vitez.

Over 30 Croat defenders and civilians died during the crushing of the Muslim army's offensive in this area. Heavy losses have been inflicted on the aggressor, particularly on its elite formations.

Mostar Reported Under Heavy Artillery Attack

LD2512184093 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Fighters of the Croat Defense Council and the Croatian army celebrated, in a cynical and typically criminal fashion, the arrival of the season of peace by raining hundreds of destructive shells on the lines of demarcation and civilian settlements particularly in the southern and northern parts of the Mostar municipality and by unleashing a hellish thunder of fire from infantry weapons. Since midnight, when the entire Christian world welcomed with dignity the Christmas season in an atmosphere of peace and humility in the face of God, the Ustashas demonstrated in an original way their destructive firepower by pounding the lines of demarcation and civilian settlements. All day long the joint aggressors have—to the accompaniment of constant fire from infantry weapons, anti-tank missiles and drunken Ustashas—been firing their largest-calibre weapons in the zone of responsibility of forces of the 4th Corps.

Muslims Appeal to Izetbegovic to Stop Bloodshed

LD2312175093 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1643 GMT 23 Dec 93

["Pool" item]

[Text] Banja Luka, Dec 23 (TANJUG)—The authorities of the newly proclaimed Muslim autonomous province of west Bosnia (APWB) have appealed once more on Muslim fundamentalist leader Alija Izetbegovic to stop spilling Muslim blood.

The appeal carried Thursday [23 December] by the Herzeg-Bosna (Bosnian Croat state) radio points out that the fundamental aims of the APWB are to conclude a lasting and just peace among all warring sides in the former Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, to ensure normal and civilized life and to develop economic cooperation.

Recalling that Izetbegovic had ordered his forces to use all available means, force and weapons to crush autonomy, the appeal notes that the unarmed people in APWB is heroically resisting the invasion of the Sarajevo military junta.

Izetbegovic's forces are using civilian homes as barracks and military fortifications, chasing civilians from villages and shooting them with snipers equipped with silencers, the appeal states. Innocent civilians are being killed in explosions, property is being looted and family members of autonomy sympathizers are being kidnapped in order to blackmail the APWB authorities, the appeal warns.

After the September proclamation of APWB, whose leader Fikret Abdic opposes Izetbegovic's war option, the forces loyal to the Muslim republic leader went on a violent settling of accounts with the Muslim people in western Bosnia-Herzegovina, where hundreds have been killed or wounded so far on both sides. Abdic has concluded peace agreements with Bosnian Serbs and Croats in an attempt to achieve a coexistence of all three peoples.

Muslims Capture British APC, Release Soldiers

LD2312184693 London PRESS ASSOCIATION in English 1837 GMT 23 Dec 93

[By Gavin Cordon, PRESS ASSOCIATION]

[Text] Three British soldiers kidnapped by Muslim fighters have been released unharmed, the Ministry of Defence said tonight. The soldiers, serving with the UN peacekeeping force, were seized by gunmen together with their armoured personnel carrier near Gornji Vakuf in central Bosnia earlier today. The alarm was raised by a fourth soldier who managed to escape. It was tonight unclear what had happened to the APC. Reports from Bosnia said that that the men had been released close to their base at Vitez without the vehicle. It was thought the kidnapping may have been carried out by irregular fighters in order to draw attention to a local grievance. The area around Gornji Vakuf is fiercely disputed by Muslim and Croat forces.

Bosnian Croats Protest Over UN Troops' 'Behavior'

LD2312161393 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Excerpt] This is Zdenko Vranjes reporting from Mostar for Croatian radio:

Due to incomprehensible and scandalous behaviour displayed by members of the British UNPROFOR [UN Protection Forces] battalion during a Muslim attack on White Path convoy yesterday, and their treatment of participants of the convoy before and after the attack, the ministry of defense of the Croat republic of Herceg-Bosna is going to propose to the top Herceg-Bosna bodies to reconsider their overall policy towards peace forces, an extraordinary statement issued by the political department of the ministry of defense of the Croat republic of Herceg-Bosna says among other things.

When it became more than obvious that the convoy would come under attack on its return journey from Nova Bila, British Blue Helmets refused to transport participants of the convoy and protect their lives. When the bloody attack took place in which one driver was killed and five other participants of the convoy were wounded, they did not even come to see the wounded people. UNPROFOR indirectly bears responsibility for the death and wounding of the participants, the statement of the political department says.

The statement goes on to say that while UNPROFOR is failing to provide protection for humanitarian workers on one side, its armoured personnel carriers are transporting ammunition for Izetbegovic's army in Uskoplje [Gornji Vakuf] which is attacking Croat villages and disturbing HVO defense. The political department also says that all the events in connection with the convoy indicate that the attack on the convoy had thoroughly been planned and agreed with a view of seizing vehicles and equipment necessary to the Muslim army for the transport of manpower, ammunition and further attacks.

The statement also points at the fact that in yesterday's attacks the Muslim army fired an incredibly huge amount of shells and other ammunition which shows that they had obtained them from the Serbs and partly from UNPROFOR. At the same time they are forgetting that such developments suit the Serbs. The more the Muslims and the Croats weaken each other in fighting, the easier it will be for the Serbs to continue with their territorial conquests, the extraordinary statement by the political department of the Ministry of Defense of the Croat republic of Herceg-Bosna says.

According to HVO official reports from central Bosnia, the Muslim army is not observing the truce and is continuing with sporadic attacks on Novi Travnik and Vitez. The

attacks are considerably less intense than yesterday. Busovaca has been relatively peaceful this morning.

In the hardest war day for the Lasva river valley yesterday 24 civilians and members of the Croatian Defense Council were killed, while 47 others were wounded. These are details that Colonel Dario Kordic presented in a letter sent to President of the Croat republic of Herceg-Bosna Mate Boban last night.

There are no more vacant beds in the Franciscan hospital in Nova Bila, the letter says. [passage omitted]

Bosnian Croats Announce General Mobilization

LD2312235093 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2307 GMT 23 Dec 93

["Pool" item]

[Text] Belgrade, December 23 (TANJUG)—The Bosnian Croat state, Herzeg-Bosna, proclaimed Thursday night general mobilization because of the Muslim offensive on central Bosnia which continued unabated despite a Christmas ceasefire agreement agreed on Wednesday [22 December] in Brussels at the Bosnia peace talks. As claimed by the Croatian radio, the Herzeg-Bosna Defense Ministry has called 'all Croatian people in and out of the homeland to immediately put themselves at the service of defense of all human and material potentials.'

The Croatian population was being asked in a announcement to report as soon as possible to the nearest military unit and place all extra equipment and arms without delay at the disposal of the forces of the Bosnian Croats, as the time has come 'to respond to the Muslim aggressor with full force and preserve the lives and property of the Croatian people whereever they are threatened.'

The fighting between the former allies—Muslims and Croats—began earlier this year and has escalated Wednesday in nearly entire central Bosnia, an area populated with a mixed Muslim-Croats population.

According to the Croatian radio, the Muslim forces launched Thursday an offensive on the Croatian villages and towns in the Lasva river valley. The Muslims were especially keen on taking Vitez, the site of the strategically important explosives factory. During the previous Muslim attacks on vitez, the Croats have threatened to blow up the explosives factory in case it was in danger of falling into the hands of the Muslim forces. This would, in the view of experts, cause a disaster with unforseeable consequences.

The Muslim-controlled Sarajevo Radio reported Thursday that the Muslim army killed 50 and captured 4 Croatian soldiers in the fighting around the former railroad station in Vitez. The radio, citing Muslim military sources, claimed that the Muslim forces seized the village of Zaselje near Vitez and thus approached the communication Gornja Vecerska-Zaselje [as received].

Ganic Denies Involvement With Algerian Massacre

LD2612191993 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Discussing the results of Ejup Ganic's tour of several Arab states, the presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina has been informed about a statement on the tragic events in Algeria by Mate Granic, Croatian foreign minister and deputy prime minister. Granic linked the violence against foreigners in Algeria, in which a number of Croats were killed, with Ganic's visit to Algeria before the incident [words indistinct]. This is completely untrue. The Bosnia-Herzegovina presidency energetically denies this insinuation and the lies by a minister of the Croatian Government, as they can only be an additional burden in the relations between the two states.

Granic Comments on Cease-Fire, Territory

LD2412152893 Zagreb HTV Television in Serbo-Croatian 2220 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Interview with Mate Granic, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, by unidentified interviewer; in the framework of the "Slikom na Sliku" program; in Zagreb—live]

[Excerpts] [Question] Let me stress right at the beginning of the program that what should have been the only small success—the Christmas cease-fire—has failed to be so. We can see that one of the most ferocious offensives is being waged by Bosnia-Herzegovina units in central Bosnia. Why is that and what is the Croatian Government's stand on this?

[Granic] It is definitely one of the most ferocious offensives, but it does not come as a surprise to us. We have been warning the international community for almost a month now of a possible offensive by Muslim forces, which is well-prepared and along a very wide frontline. We have informed the entire international community about it. Mr. Sarinic, Mr. Akmadzic, Mr. Boban, and I discussed this today with Izetbegovic and Silajdzic in the presence of Lord Owen and Stoltenberg who confirmed this offensive supported by information from NATO. We demanded that the agreed cease-fire be observed immediately. We will see what will happen on the ground. It is necessary to put up a resistance using all available means. That is the message to Bosnian Croats.

[Question] I know this is not, strictly speaking, within your competence, but can we try and assess the situation on the ground. A new round of talks is expected on 15 January. Anything can happen until 15 January. This offensive could become even more widespread and even more ferocious. What will Croatia do as a last resort? Can we expect that which Mr. Susak publicly announced several times—military intervention?

[Granic] First, it was agreed today that President Izetbegovic and President Boban will send strict orders to the commanders to end all offensive actions all the way down the chain of command and that the UN Protection Force [UNPROFOR] will be responsible for supervision. That is what was agreed and what should be implemented. Of course, in the event the offensive continues, the Croats in Bosnia will be allowed all means of defense. [passage omitted]

[Question] Let us talk about something that is interesting although it has not been explained enough, namely this, so to speak, Croatian-Serbian proposal, the Milosevic-Tudjman proposal about what this Muslim republic should be within the union. Does this proposal include the border between the republic of Srpska and Herceg-Bosna? Alternatively, is this proposal just a matter of finalizing the shape of this Muslim republic?

[Granic] One should say in clear terms that Lord Owen and Stoltenberg invited all three sides and drew up the negotiating program in Geneva. In other words, on the first evening presidents Tudjman and Alija Izetbegovic talked for an hour and half. They opened the talks. President Tudjman submitted several very specific, constructive proposals. That evening did not see any concrete results although the atmosphere at the talks was positive.

As for the second day in Geneva, the Croatian side talked first to Lord Owen and later the Croatian and the Serbian side talked about a draft map supplied by Lord Owen following his talks with the Serbian side. Consequently, this was a Serbian proposal. It was revised throughout the day in order to find 33 percent of territory for the Bosnian Muslim republic. This followed the European Union's demands.

At the same time, the Croatian side managed to secure 17.5 percent although there were predictions prior to the meeting that we would be very glad if we got 15 or 16 percent, and even smaller percentages were mentioned. This is where President Tudjman demonstrated his determination to go as far as to walk out of the negotiations in the event of any kind of pressures being brought to bear which would lead to less than 17.5 percent of territory for the Croats of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

What does this mean? This means that this extra percentage raises a possibility of negotiations on Posavina and increasing an area bordering on the republic of Srpska to the northwest of Livno.

[Question] Did the Serbian side gave any assurances, provided there were any negotiations, to the effect that the Serbs would be willing to cede these areas you mentioned to the Croats in Bosnia. In this context, Posavina is particularly interesting.

[Granic] This is the only possibility. Consequently, this was just one part of the negotiations, just one remote proposal for continuing negotiations and nothing else. This was just one of the possible options. We also demanded that the Muslim side submit its proposal. We also had firm stands and possible variations of Croatia's proposals. Nothing has been agreed as yet. This is the main conclusion regarding territorial demarcation. We nevertheless reached a firm agreement; this is something of a novelty—the Serbian side agreed to give, or rather to return, 33 percent of territory. At the moment the Serbian side controls—yes, that is true—70 percent of that territory. This means that they should hand back the territory they have taken through military conquest.

[Question] I find something slightly unclear in this sentence about the percentages. There is talk of the Croats getting 17.5 percent and the Muslims 33.3 percent. About 50 percent remains for the Serbs—actually slightly over 49 percent. Therefore, the Serbs should give back 20 percent.

[Granic] Yes, that's right.

[Question] Which 20 percent would that be? I think people do not quite understand that.

[Granic] Part of the territory in central Bosnia and in eastern and western Bosnia.

[Question] OK. Mr. Granic, was there any talk at the meetings in Brussels and Geneva about Krajina, about the so-called Krajinas, about the fate of the occupied Croatian territories.

[Granic] Yes, we discussed that with Lord Owen and Milosevic. This was the first issue President Tudjman addressed. It was demanded of Milosevic to accept firmly the modus vivendi specified in the latest agreement, which envisages, first of all a cease-fire and the reestablishing of communications, and in the second phase—specified at the London Two talks—local autonomy within the UN Protected Areas, and London Three which envisages mutual recognition [between Serbia and Croatia] within internationally recognized borders.

[Question] Concerning Bosnian Muslims access to the sea, President Tudjman mentioned Prevlaka, but, of course, only as part of a comprehensive solution. That would go back to the same topic and open the problem of changing borders. Was there any talk, in the framework of the talks on Croatia, about any other part of Croatia which might be swapped?

[Granic] No.

[Question] Baranja?

[Granic] No. Absolutely not. The Croatian side is not prepared to discuss that at all. As far as access to sea for the Muslims is concerned, that is one of the greatest problems that need to be solved. Talks on this issue will be resumed after the New Year. As you know, the formula adopted aboard the "Invincible" is: Ploce as a duty-free zone, a small port on the river Neretva near Celjevo, and shared tourist facilities in Klek. The Muslim side demands more: they want a so-called condominium, shared control over the Neum area, which the Croatian side rejected, as President Tudjman said very clearly today. One possible model is access to the sea near Prevlaka in exchange for territory in Dubrovnik's hinterland, in which case Neum would automatically go to the Croat state. Of course, such decisions can only be made by the Assembly of the Republic of Croatia, but that was a possible option which the Muslim side has now rejected.

[Question] We have come to the end of this conversation, and almost to the end of the year too. What will 1994 bring us? Are you optimistic about the possibility that things could stabilize at—least to a certain point—on the territory of the former Yugoslavia?

[Granic] As you can see, there are no quick solutions. Things should be seen realistically, and the best moves should be made at all times. However, this conference has also consolidated Croatia's international position. Apart from access to the sea, there are no other significant pressures on the Republic of Croatia. Our endeavors in humanitarian matters have been clearly noted, as well as the release of prisoners and the freedom of movement for convoys. It should be noted that in the past month, 294 convoys have passed through without any problems. Everyone knows what happened to the White Path convoy. The U.S. Senate and Congress were informed about that; President Tudjman personally raised it twice at the Geneva conference and in Brussels, and I informed all EU foreign ministers. I believe that the current positions of the Republic of Croatia and President Tudjman personally are being consolidated, which is very important in order to find a common language, a way of communicating with the European Union. That means that our next firm demands will be in the direction of being included in all EU programs, of being granted financial aid which has already been approved and, of course, of agreements with the EU.

[Question] Mr Granic, thank you.

[Granic] It was my pleasure.

Tudjman Position in Latest Talks Viewed

AU2312195393 Split SLOBODNA DALMACIJA in Serbo-Croatian 20 Dec 93 p 5

[Article by Josip Jovic: "Pressure on Tudjman"]

[Text] Tomorrow, Geneva will again be the place for trying to find a cure for what is, at the moment, the most difficult political disease of Europe. In the meantime, since the last meeting, several important things have happened which can influence the success of the resuming peace negotiations and which indicate the orientation of possible solutions.

In Croatia, President Tudjman revealed the proposal of the cochairman of the peace conference concerning the Muslim access to the sea via corridor from Stolac to Prevlaka. This would be in exchange for annexing the area of Neum to Croatia and a more compact shape of Herceg-Bosna, which probably implies exchanging Jajce and Bugojno. The president himself was neither in favor of nor opposed to that. Facing this dilemma, he decided to offer the text to the Croatian public, and the reaction was mostly negative.

Believing in Cease-Fire

In view of that, we must also consider the joint statement of almost all the parliamentary parties (except the HNS [Croatian National Party] and the IDS [Istrian Democratic Congress]) supporting President Tudjman not to yield to proposals on changing borders and which condemns the Serbian aggression and Islamic fundamentalism. Perhaps the statement was inspired by the terrible killing of 12 "Hidroelektra" workers in Algeria, but, in any case, it is finally the first serious attempt of all

Croatian political forces to act together regarding questions of vital national interests. Sharing the responsibility with others, the president himself is making his position a little bit easier. However, this is also an indication that there will be no trading with Croatian territory. This statement was probably written in collusion with the president himself and not against him. There will definitely be no trading of territories on the principle of "one's own for one's own." Too bad the HNS—whose autograph is not on the statement for technical reasons it seems, and the IDS, which refused to sign the statement due to its "principles"—did not sign the statement. This Istrian party explained its refusal to sign the statement saying that it objected that the item on minorities was not included in the joint statement, and said that it was allegedly not familiar with the present flow of negotiations, and added that it was also due to some specific quality of the Istrians. Since those reasons are not very plausible, for minorities are not a matter for the Geneva negotiations in this stage, regardless of the present flow of the negotiations, the statement in itself is more than clear. The reference to specific qualities of the Istrians seems senseless, however, and we sadly deduce that in Croatia there are also some political parties which are not very interested in preserving borders and the territorial integrity of Croatia, since they do not even care to give their signature for that cause!

In the occupied areas of Croatia, an agreement on the Christmas cease-fire lasting until 15 January was signed. The agreement is serious, for it was signed in the presence of General Cot by Petar Stipetic on one side and on the other Kosta Novakovic, i.e. two high-ranking commanding officers. In the meantime, one should find a solution for a lasting cease-fire or a modus vivendi, which will be a prerequisite for the final political solution. Milosevic's plans of gradual giving up on Knin are, however, thwarted by Babic's election victory in the occupied areas. The Belgrade media advertised the "krajina elections" as a model of democratic expression, until it turned out that the disobedient Knin dentist got an overwhelming majority. Now they are trying to declare those elections invalid.

Access to the Sea

Elections were also held in Serbia proper, and this time Slobodan Milosevic will not have to make pre-election speeches in Switzerland. Because of those elections, the continuation of the conference was postponed to 21 December, instead of 15 December. Effects of the sanctions are more and more felt, and some new measures are imminent. Perhaps the parliamentary picture of Serbia will be somewhat different. Socialists will probably not be so dominant as before, but Milosevic's power will not diminish. Only those even more radical than himself stand a chance, but they are his army.

The Muslim side, which no longer enjoys the status of the innocent victim, is prepared to be satisfied with one-third of Bosnia-Herzegovina territory and to relinquish the extreme option of fighting to the last man. Humanitarian convoys to Nova Bila, Zenica, and Maglaj, releasing prisoners from detention camps on Croatian territory, the exchange of prisoners, etc. can contribute to reducing tensions. However, the Muslims will probably insist on getting access to the sea. And, for the first time, the Croatian side could be "the hindrance" to reaching the agreement. It will be pressured the most this time, and the problem lies in the fact that it can make no concessions, it has not conquered foreign territories.

Two important events happened on the international scene. Ultra-nationalists won in Russia, but that will not influence Russia's foreign policies yet, for Western-oriented Boris Yeltsin will continue pulling all the strings. However, the West must solve the situation in the Balkans before the white bear stands on his feet and extends his paws. The Western European Union had no more patience with Greece, its nonprincipled member and its president from the New Year, and it recognized Macedonia which is also protected by U.S. soldiers. That can be another factor of consolidation of affairs. Now Greece will not need to plot with Serbia because of Macedonia.

Tudjman Demands Cease-Fire, Hints At Reprisals

AU2312163793 Paris AFP in English 1617 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Zagreb, Nov 23 (AFP)—Croatian President Franjo Tudjman demanded Thursday [23 December] that the Bosnian Government call an immediate cease-fire in central Bosnia, hinting that otherwise reprisals might be taken against Bosnian refugees in Croatia. In a letter to Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, Tudjman denounced the majority-Moslem government for "criminal actions" in "one of the most violent offensives" launched to date. He maintained that 24 Bosnian Croats died and 47 were wounded in a Moslem offensive Wednesday and warned that the Bosnian Government forces were "stirring up animosity" in Croatian opinion towards the 250,000 Bosnian refugees sheltered in Croatia. Hinting that the refugees could be subjected to reprisals, he added that the Moslem offensive "will have a devastating effect on the peace talks and future relations between our two countries and peoples."

Croatian radio here reported earlier Thursday that ground attacks and artillery bombardments Wednesday by Moslem forces in central Bosnia killed at least 36 people and wounded 30. The United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) at Kiseljak said there had been fierce fighting around Vitez, and reported shelling around Kiseljak. Tudjman's letter was published by the official Croatian agency HINA after he arrived back from the unsuccessful Bosnian peace talks in Brussels on Wednesday saying that the Bosnian Moslems had, by rejecting the latest compromises, chosen the military option.

Earlier Thursday Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban said in Brussels that progress in the peace talks would only be possible if Bosnian Moslems ended their current military offensive.

The three sides—Moslems, Croats and Serbs—agreed on a Christmas truce during a meeting with foreign ministers from the 12- nation European Community, but despite making progress failed to secure the political agreement which would underpin a lasting peace.

Tudjman said the Moslem demands at the talks in Brussels and in Geneva on Tuesday were "unacceptable." They amounted to asking the Bosnian Croats to cede all of central Bosnia, he said.

Boban confirmed that a ceasefire agreed in Brussels Wednesday by the warring factions was supposed to take effect Thursday, to last until January 15. But he told journalists: "Progress is possible only if the (Moslem) offensive ceases. We have information that there was a large-scale Moslem offensive over the last two days that killed 40 people."

Tudjman said he had proposed that United Nations observers be stationed at the military headquarters of Croats, Serbs and Moslems "so that everyone will know who is breaking the ceasefire and it will be said publicly." Tudjman earlier ruled out any form of joint Croat-Moslem sovereignty over the port of Neum, which the Moslem side wants as an access to the Adriatic Sea if it is to accept a three-way partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina with the Serbs and Croats.

Boban said the talks between Moslems, Serbs and Croats might resume in Brussels next week. The co-chairmen of the Bosnia peace talks were chairing separate talks in the Belgian capital Thursday—first between the Bosnian Croats and Moslems, then between the Bosnian Serbs and the Moslems.

Meanwhile in Paris it was announced that French Defence Minister Francois Leotard was to spend Christmas Eve night with French troops stationed with UNPROFOR [United Nations Protection Force] in the Moslem enclave of Bihac, northwest Bosnia.

Babic Expected To Win Krajina Elections

AU2612184093 Belgrade BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 23 Dec 93 p 13

[Report by Srdjan Radulovic: "Babic Is Waiting for the Second Round"]

[Excerpts] Who won the elections in Krajina? The uncertainty of the answer to this question is inferred by the announcement of Milan Martic's election team that they will ask the constitutional court of the republic of Serbian Krajina to annul all presidential and parliamentary election results of 12 December. However, the elections rerun in the constituencies of Knin, Benkovac, Krnjak, Daruvar, Podravska Slatina, and Grubisino Polje, and five polling stations in Drnis, Gracac, Donji Lapac, Mirkovci, and Vukovar on 26 December is not in a danger yet. According to the election rules, only after this rerun will it be known whether the second round of elections for the president of Krajina will be held. The final make-up of the Krajina Assembly will also be known then (the parliament has 84 deputy seats).

It is hard to believe that all the results will be annulled, because the electoral commission has already taken into account complaints made by Martic's team and annulled elections in Knin, Krnjak, and few other places because of irregularities. The most drastic case was reported in Knin, where 24 ballots were found in the street (in a trash container). According to these ballots, Rade Leskovac, leader of the Krajina Radicals, received 12 votes and Milan Martic eight. It has not yet been established why the ballots were in the wrong "box," but what is certain is that there are only two reasons they were there: This was either an attempt to "take away" the number of opponents' votes, or a way to "find" a reason to dispute the election results.

Even though the electoral commission stated that, according to the results of the first round of voting, no candidate was going to receive more than one half the votes necessary to win the presidential elections, even if the elections were not annulled in six constituencies and five polling stations, the results of the voting on 26 December could disprove this claim. In the first round Milan Babic received 49.09 percent of votes (116,014 out of 236,300 voters who took part in elections). One more percent of votes, which is how many he needs to win the presidential elections before the second round of elections is held, could come from the Radicals who said that they would vote for Babic in the second round of elections. [passage omitted]

The repeat of elections in Podravska Slatina, Daruvar, and Grubisino Polje could be the only major unknown. These places are in the western Slavonia in the UNPROFOR sector "West," and are not under the control of the Krajina authorities. It is estimated that some 90,000 Serbs have either been moved out or expelled from this region, which has been under the control of the Croatian police since virtually the beginning of the implementation of the Vance-Owen plan. The number of voters in this region is not known, nor is the number many people who live there, in the mainly Okucani area and the east part of Krajina.

The elections rerun in the aforementioned electoral units and polling stations should not affect the distribution of deputy seats after the first round of voting in which Babic's Serbian Democratic Party of Krajina won the greatest number of seats, 30. The Radicals and Hadzic's Serbian Democratic Party for the Unification of All Serbian Lands are in the second place with 16 seats each. They are followed by independent candidates, who won nine seats. Other parties, including the Krajina Socialists, won only a few seats. Considering the results of the first round, including the ones that were annulled, Babic could have not won the

absolute majority in the parliament. This is now opening up the possibility of a coalition government in the Republic of Serbian Krajina. The Serbian Democratic Party of Krajina and the Radicals could form a coalition government because they have already secured a majority in the parliament. This combination is favored among Krajina political analysts, because, if Babic is to form his own government (one-party government), he could soon find himself against the Hadzic-Leskovac alliance, which was difficult to imagine until recently. The remaining question, of course, is what position will the "independent" deputies will adopt after the new assembly has been constituted.

UK's Hogg Meets With Tudjman, Susak in Zagreb

LD2312142693 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1200 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Croatian President Franjo Tudjman received a Douglass Hogg, UK minister of state for foreign and commonwealth affairs, in Zagreb this morning. Hogg made a brief statement following talks with President Tudjman.

[Begin Hogg recording in English with superimposed Serbo-Croatian translation] We discussed the position of the UNPA [United Nations Protected Areas] zones, access to sea for the Muslims, and the calming of the situation. I noted President Tudjman's stand on the normalization of relations between Croats, Serbs, and Muslims in Bosnia, and I think that this desire is in the center of his policy. He also hopes that it will be possible to normalize the situation in the UNPA zones very soon. [end recording]

Asked whether his stay in Croatia precedes a diplomatic initiative by Britain, Minister Hogg said that the mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg were sufficiently familiar with all details and that they should be the ones to make initiatives. However, the EU [European Union] will support their actions and that does not mean that there will be no new initiatives to help the mediators.

Prompted by another question, he went on to say that the talks with President Tudjman did not include the problems faced by the White Path convoy for Nova Bila, but that they agreed that no one had the right to hamper humanitarian actions, especially when central Bosnia is concerned. He added that he knew that the British units of the blue helmets provided escort for the convoy, that they would do everything to ensure a safe return for the convoy, and that the British soldiers would give priority to the safety of people.

Answering the next journalist's question, Minister Hogg said that during the talks with President Tudjman they also discussed Prevlaka. Both Croatian and Muslim stands are known, but a mutually acceptable solution concerning access to sea for the Muslims will have to be reached through negotiations.

Following the talks with President Tudjman, Douglas Hogg left Croatia for Macedonia where he will attend the opening of the British Embassy in Skopje.

Before the meeting with President Tudjman, he had a meeting with Defense Minister Gojko Susak. After the meeting, both participants said that they had discussed the UNPA zones, the calming of the situation in central Bosnia, as well as humanitarian problems and the Muslim access to sea.

Federal

Jovanovic: New Bosnian Accord To Be Drawn Up

LD2612215093 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1106 GMT 26 Dec 93

["Pool" item]

[Text] Herceg-Novi, Yugoslavia, Dec 25 (TANJUG)—Yugoslav Foreign Minister Vladislav Jovanovic believes that another agreement on peace for war-shattered Bosnia-Herzegovina will be drawn up for adoption by mid-January. Speaking for Radio Herceg-Novi on Saturday, Jovanovic said that bilateral talks between Bosnia's belligerents would be held by January 15, to pave the way for final agreement.

He said that the status of Sarajevo remained the biggest problem and that the success of future talks on peace for Bosnia was jeopardised mostly by the Bosnian Muslim government's determination to prolong the war in the hope of foreign military intervention in that former Yugoslav republic. The Muslims' hope is being kept alive by some foreign factors, but most of the international community wants durable and just peace to replace war in Bosnia-Herzegovina as soon as possible, Jovanovic explained.

In the context of the question of the republic of Serb Krajina (R.S.K.), Jovanovic said that Croatia had finally realised that the problem could not be solved by war. He said that talks might soon be expected to be held on ending hostilities between Croatia and the U.N.-protected R.S.K., which would be immediately followed by talks on the problems of infrastructure and the reopening of roads, telecommunications and the oil pipeline. He added that consensus on a modus vivendi in the R.S.K. had been reached.

The R.S.K. has been proclaimed by the local Serbs in their ancestral lands in those parts within the arbitrary communist-era borders of Croatia where they are the majority population, in response to Croatia's violent secession from former Yugoslavia. Jovanovic opined that the United States and Europe probably did not differ essentially in their approach to the Bosnian crisis. 'The European Union is interested in ending the crisis for financial reasons, whereas the United States has some undisclosed strategic objectives in the Balkans, which is why it is not interested in ending the Bosnian crisis just now.'

'We believe that the United States will not be able to ignore this interest of Western Europe for much longer,' said Jovanovic. He said he was convinced that Greece would not permit the application of double standards to the Yugoslav crisis when it takes over the Union's rotating presidency in January.

Dinar To Be Revalued After New Year

LD2312184293 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1713 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Belgrade, December 23 (TANJUG)—As of January 1, nine zeros will be dropped from the current Yugoslav bank-notes as one new dinar is to be worth 1,000,000,000 current dinars, the federal government announced on Thursday. The current bank-notes will be replaced by the new ones until February 28, 1994. In the previous re-denomination (fourth since World War Two) on October 1, six zeros were dropped, one million dinars becoming one dinar. In the meantime, ten new bank-notes have been circulated. The latest bill of 500,000,000,000 dinars was issued on Thursday.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, under a total international blockade over the past 19 months, registers a world record high inflation which exceeded 20,000 percent in November. Although the state mint is working day and night, a chronic shortage of cash reigns.

A 50,000,000,00-dinar bank-note, which was worth ten d-mark at the time of issue two weeks earlier, on Thursday was worth half the d-mark at street value. Half the d-mark on Thursday can buy a litre of milk. To buy all the basic food for one day, a customer needs stacks of dinar bank-notes.

Tax on Citizens Leaving Country Introduced

AU2312190493 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Our citizens will most probably soon have to pay extra for leaving our country. The tax for each citizen will be 10 German marks [DM], and if one travels with a car it will be between DM50 and DM100. That is what Federal Minister of Economic Relations with Other Countries Milorad Unkovic announced at a gathering of economists.

Kontic, Djukanovic Discuss Economic Policy

LD2712115993 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1111 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Podgorica, 27 Dec (TANJUG)—Federal Prime Minister Radoje Kontic and Montenegrin Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic had a meeting in Podgorica today.

It was announced that the two prime ministers exchanged views on the federal government's plans for economic policy in the year ahead.

During the talks the Montenegrin prime minister gave detailed information to the federal prime minister on the economic, financial, and social problems facing Montenegro, as well as on the increasingly pronounced difficulties in maintaining the possible level of production and citizens' social welfare.

It was jointly assessed that the suppression of hyperinflation is the most urgent issue for economic policy in the

year ahead. It was also agreed that a purely monetary approach in curbing it is not acceptable because this does not pay sufficient heed to the social implications of such an operation.

The Montenegrin prime minister's cabinet also announced today that talks designed to reach agreement on this and other matters which are important when drawing up an economic policy action plan for the coming year will be resumed over the coming days in Belgrade.

Milosevic, Bulatovic Attend Defense Council Meeting

LD2512153393 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1421 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Belgrade, 25 Dec (TANJUG)—A session of the Supreme Defense Council, chaired by Zoran Lilic, president of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, was held in Belgrade today, the military office of the FRY president has announced. In addition to Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and Montenegrin President Momir Bulatovic, members of the Supreme Defense Council, the session was also attended by Federal Defense Minister Pavle Bulatovic and Lt-Col-Gen Momcilo Perisic, chief of general staff of the Yugoslav Army. After it reviewed issues of importance for the work and functioning of the FRY's army and defense, the Supreme Defense Council adopted many decisions within its competence.

Government Appeals to UN To Lift Sports Sanctions

LD2512202993 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1829 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Belgrade, Dec 25 (TANJUG)—The Yugoslav Government has appealed to the U.N. Security Council to lift sanctions against the new Yugoslavia (Serbia/Montenegro) in sports.

Prime Minister Radoje Kontic has written to Security Council President Li Zhaozing hoping for support for the lifting of the snactions against Yugoslav athletes in the belief that international sports gatherings are a precondition for peace and understanding among nations.

In his letter, a copy of which was submitted to TANJUG on Saturday, Kontic said that the Yugoslav Government was constantly making efforts to create conditions for a peaceful settlement of war conflicts in the lands of former Yugoslavia.

Kontic has informed the president of the International Olympic Committee (I.O.C.), Juan Antonio Samaranch, of the request made to the Security Council on the basis of the United Nations' resolution on the Olympic truce, the international year of sports and the Olympic ideal, the U.N. Charter on universal respect for human rights, the I.O.C. charter on the autonomy of international sports and the non-interference of politics in sports. He said he hoped that Samaranch, as a dedicated champion of the Olympic principle of non-interference of politics in sports, would approach the Security Council in order to lift the unjust sanctions against Yugoslav athletes.

The imposition of the sanctions in May of 1992 has been preventing Yugoslav athletes from representing their country in international team competitions, and only allows them to compete in individual events under the Olympic flag. The U.N. Security Council imposed the sanctions for Yugoslavia's alleged involvement in civil war raging among the local Moslems, Serbs and Croats in neighbouring Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Government Statement on Combatting Inflation

LD2512212393 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2030 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Belgrade, Dec 25 (TANJUG) - The Yugoslav Government said on Saturday [25 December] that the last quarter of the current year had produced a monster inflation and monetary disturbances which necessitate immediate radical measures to combat them, shore up the crumbling production, enforce financial discipline and increase revenues for public spending.

A statement released by the Information Ministry said the government had decided to retain as its first priority the protection of the section of the population in the lowest income brackets.

The disastrous hyper-inflation, brought on by U.N. sanctions clamped on the new Yugoslavia (Serbia/Montenegro), which appears likely to hit the world's all-time high, has slashed the weekly wages to between two and three Deutsche Marks at the prevalent black-market rate, pushing most Yugoslavs to the brink of destitution.

This year's unfavourable trends have not been curbed, as evident from the fact that the domestic product has dropped to barely 39 percent of the 1989 level, the statement said.

The country's difficult economic and social situation is the result primarily of 'processes connected with the disintegration of former Yugoslavia and, especially, the sanctions imposed by the U.N. Security Council and the attendant groundless and unjust blockade of yugoslavia by the international community,' said the statement released after the government's session on Saturday.

Serbia

Simic Considered Candidate for Future Premier

AU2312154093 Belgrade POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 23 Dec 93 p 9

[Report by L.C.: "Zeljko Simic To Head the Serbian Government?"]

[Text] After the latest elections in Serbia a lot of things will be clearer, not only regarding the future economic measures aimed at curbing the hyperinflation, but also regarding cadre solutions. We have learned that one of the main candidates for the future head of the Serbian government is the current deputy prime minister Zeljko Simic. There are, of course, other names in reserve, but yesterday at least, Zeljko Simic's name came up most frequently.

We have learned that the new governor of the Yugoslav National Bank might be Zivota Mihailovic, currently the number one man of the Vojvodina Bank. The other frequently mentioned name is that of Dr. Miodrag Zecevic, current president of the French-Yugoslav Bank in Paris. However, there will be more talk about new cadre solutions in the days to come.

Democratic Party Protests 'Rigged' Votes

LD2412170693 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1441 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Belgrade, 24 Dec (TANJUG)—The Democratic Party [DS] spokesman, Bora Kuzmanovic, said at a press conference today that in three polling stations in the electoral district of Pristina, the results of voting were rigged to the advantage of the Socialist Party of Serbia [SPS], and that the DS has consequently lodged a protest with the republican electoral commission.

He claims that in each of the three polling stations, 1,000 votes for the SPS were added to the original lists, which won the party 3,000 additional votes. He said that the SPS had consequently won 21 instead of 19 seats in the electoral unit of Pristina. [passage omitted]

Voting To Be Repeated at 45 Polling Stations

LD2412122193 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1155 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Belgrade, Dec 24 (TANJUG)—Voting for the Serbian parliament will have to be repeated on Sunday, December 26, at 45 polling stations in 5 electoral districts in the Yugoslav Republic of Serbia because of irregularities detected in the procedure. The republican statistical office says that elections will be repeated in the districts of Nis, Pristina, Kragujevac, Leskovac and Belgrade.

A count of the returns at some polling stations in these districts has revealed that some ballot boxes contained more ballots than the number of voters who had cast their votes, that voters' lists were added to, that there had been cases of people voting in the name of others, etc.

The greatest number of irregularities were reported in Leskovac, southeastern Serbia, where voting will have to be repeated at 24 polling stations. In Belgrade, voting will have to be repeated at only one polling station. In the early parliamentary elections held in Serbia on December 19, the ruling Socialist Party headed by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic has won 123 seats in the 250-seat parliament.

Of the opposition parties, the Depos coalition, headed by Serbian renewal movement leader Vuk Draskovic, has fared best, securing 49 seats, followed by the Serbian Radical Party of Vojislav Seselj with 39 seats, the Democratic Party with 29 seats and the Democratic Party of Serbia with 7 seats. The Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Vojvodina has secured 5 seats in parliament, and the Coalition for Democratic Action and the Democratic Party of Albanians, 2 seats.

Statistics show that a repeat of the vote in the five electoral districts, which have a total of 20,000 voters, may change the number of seats for the parties only marginally, by no more than one or two seats.

Macedonia

Parliament Decides To Apply for NATO Membership

AU2412173693 Skopje MIC in English 24 Dec 93

[Unattributed report: "Monetary Policy Adopted"]

[Text] Macedonia's Parliament yesterday adopted the monetary-credit and foreign currency policy for the next year. The deputies also decided for Macedonia to apply for NATO membership. The only remark the deputies made to the Government's monetary policy for 1994 was that it did not provide support for the agriculture. Otherwise, the deputy group of VMRO-DPMNE [Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian Unity] was not present at yesterday's session out of solidarity and support for the tobacco producers and the bankruptcy workers.

Albania To Establish Diplomatic Relations

LD2412233493 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 2254 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Skopje, 24 Dec (TANJUG): The governments of Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia today agreed to establish diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level, Skopje radio announced today. This decision reflects "the desire of the two countries to consolidate and develop mutual relations of friendship and cooperation," a diplomatic note of the [Albanian] Foreign Ministry in Tirana says. Six countries of the European Twelve (Great Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Denmark, and the Netherlands) last week decided to establish diplomatic relations with Skopje, followed by the governments of Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, and Bulgaria.

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